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of Abortion

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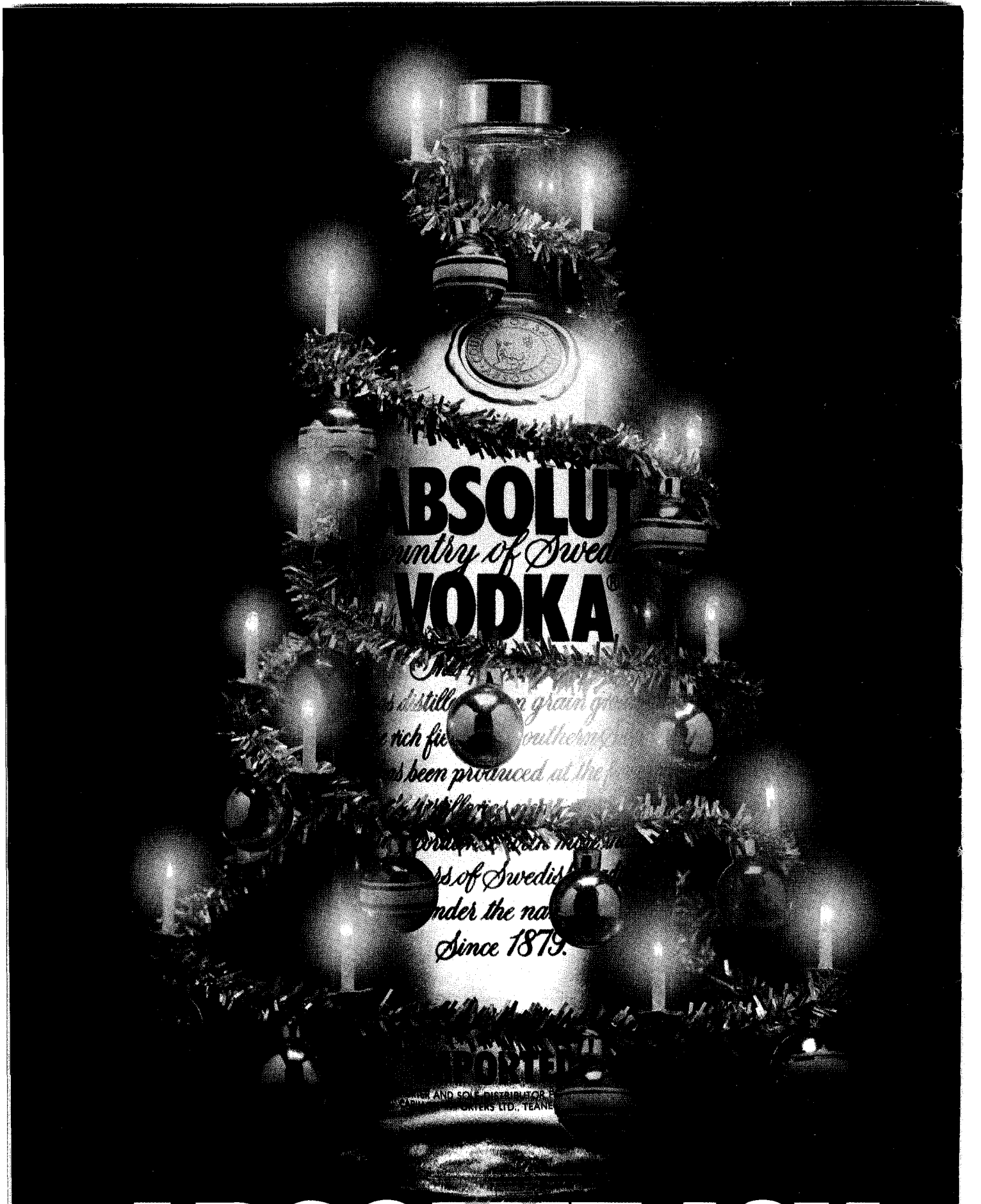

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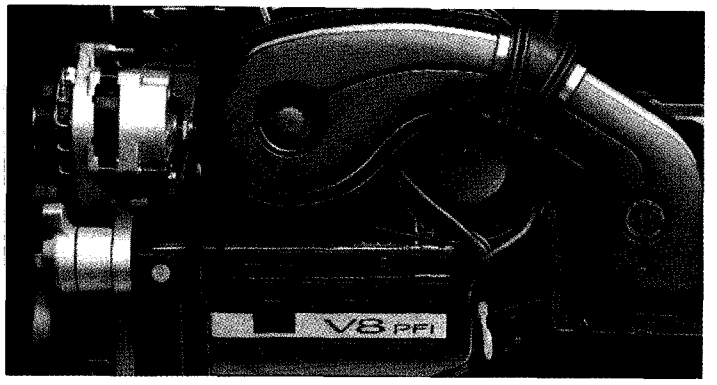

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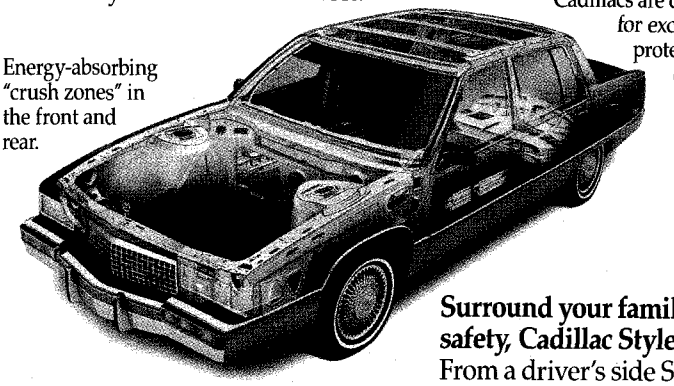

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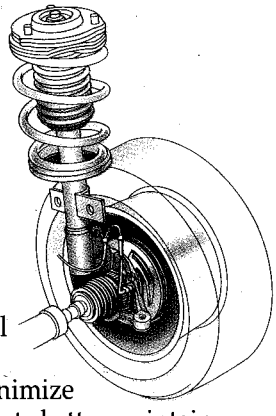

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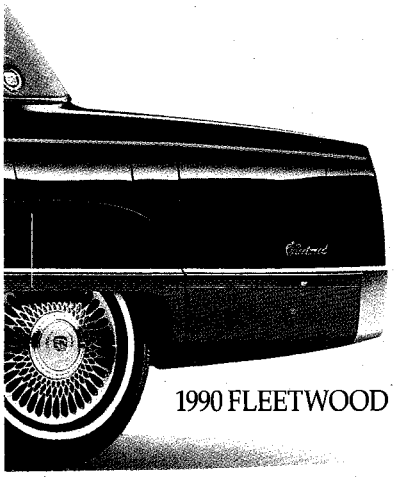

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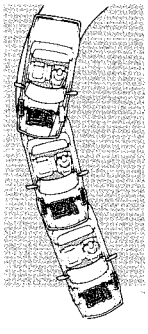

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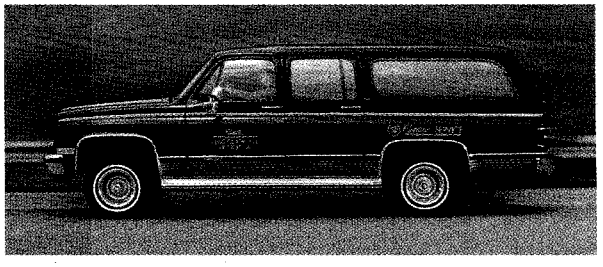

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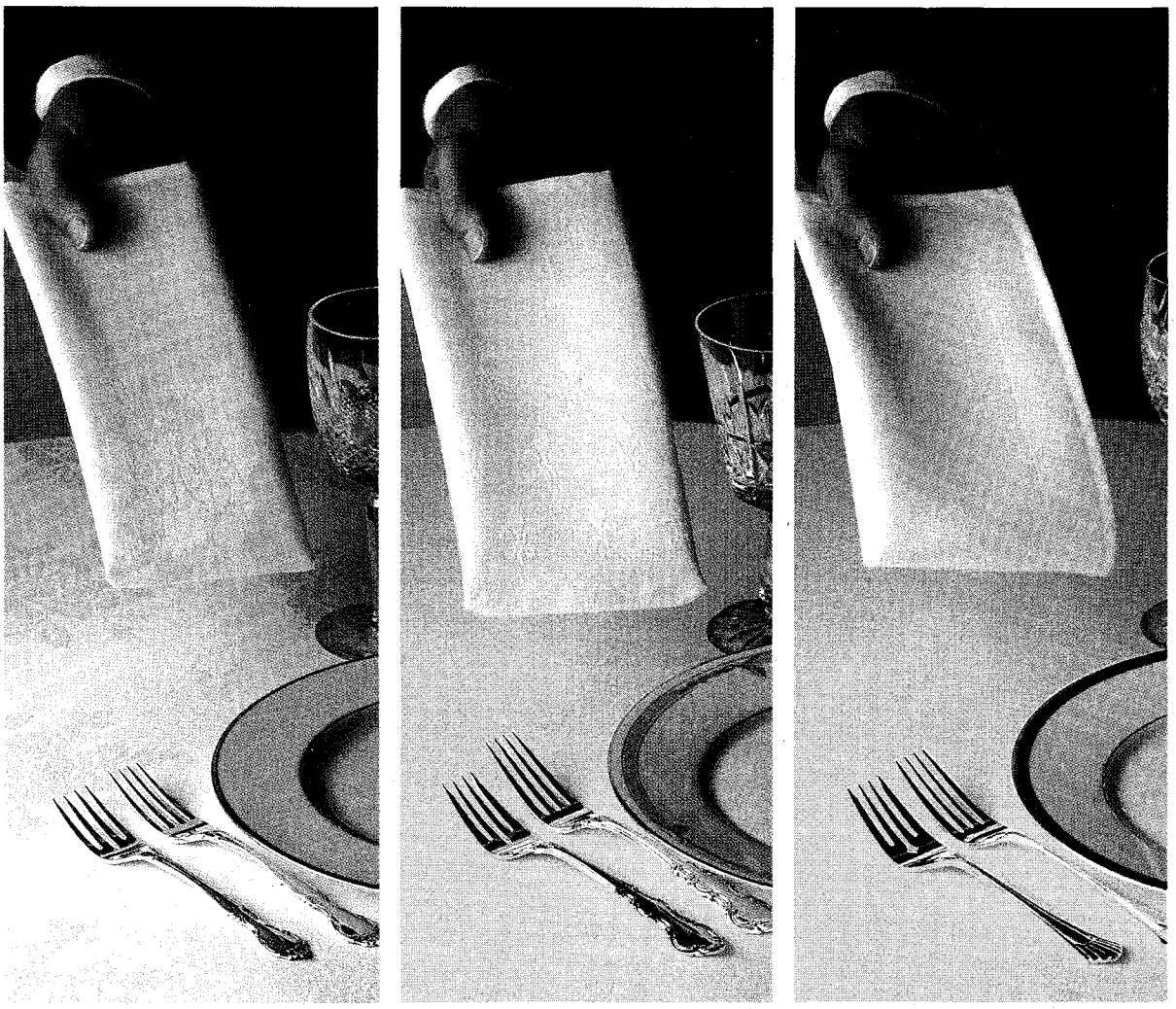

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NATIONAL REVIEW

DECEMBER 22, 1989 VOL. XLI, NO. 24

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LETTERS

Liberalism Is Long Gone

John Gray's "The End of Liberalism—or of History" [Oct. 27] succeeds in underscoring the wishful thinking of many of today's commentators on world affairs.

Gray is correct to point out that what is occurring in Poland, the Baltic states, and elsewhere in the Soviet bloc is the re-emergence of civil societies together with accompanying national identities. Such a phenomenon is only marginally related to the textbook definitions of liberal democracy embraced by journalists and academicians in the West. All movements of national determination or of national resurrection appeal to a popular base, but there is no necessary connection between this practice and current Western democratic values. Moreover, the extension of the private sector in Eastern European countries has more to do with energizing a state-controlled economy than creating a free market.

Gray is also right that Western liberal democrats proclaim the universal victory of the market while their own societies sink ever more thoroughly under government control. If overextended government is now characteristic of the West, why should we believe that the free market will soon prevail everywhere, including societies with fewer historical preconditions than our own?

Gray might have made one further point in showing the natural limits of liberalism. There is no real fit between liberalism and democracy. Liberalism and capitalism go together in polities that emphasize freedom and constitutional restraints; democracy, by contrast, has worked to increase individual equality at the expense of property rights and local liberties. Attempts at wedding liberalism and democracy, going back to John Stuart Mill, have usually resulted in combining individual civil liberties with a welfare economy. Today the National Endowment for Democracy is spreading liberal democracy, appropriately enough, by giving most of its funds to the AFL-CIO. In the merger of liberalism and democracy, it is democratic equality that prevails over competing values. Francis Fukuyama's vision of universal sameness has a radical democratic, not a liberal, cast. Fukuyama's inspiration for his vision, as Gray properly notes, is the Stalinoid admirer of the French Revolution, Alexandre Kojève, not the constitutional monarchist Hegel. Some liberal democracies may preserve more of a private sector than others; all leave social and economic positions hostage to the popular will, whether expressed through elected representatives or invoked by unelected administrators. The true end of liberalism came years ago, when democratic ideology became dominant in the West.

Paul Gottfried
Visiting Professor of Humanities
Elizabethtown College
Elizabethtown, Pa.

No Chance for Afghanistan

NR is basing its support for a policy of "negative symmetry" in Afghanistan on erroneous information ["Another Chance for Afghanistan," "The Week," Nov. 10]. It is the resistance, not the Communist regime, that "needs hardware badly"; the regime is overflowing with hardware. When the UN-brokered settlement was signed in Geneva in April 1988, the Soviet Union said it would support its puppets in every way necessary—and it has done so. Even assuming that all Soviet troops were withdrawn last February, they left behind, according to General Gromov, more than $1 billion worth of military installations, equipment, and supplies. Since February, Moscow has shipped in additional military supplies at the rate of $200 to $300 million worth *per month*. In the last eight months alone Kabul has been provided with, *inter alia*, a new professional Afghan army created inside the USSR; nearly a thousand SCUD missiles; hundreds of tanks (including an entire T-72M brigade); self-propelled artillery and rocket launchers; FROG-7B missiles; and MiG-29s and Sukhoi SU-27s, the latter a plane so advanced that it has never before been based outside the Soviet Union (and for which no non-Soviet pilots are known to have been trained).

While this huge Communist build-up has been going on, the U.S. and others have *not* "stepped up supplies" to the resistance; on the contrary, they cut them down. As the State Department has now grudgingly admitted, U.S. aid to the resistance was severely reduced in May 1988 and all but cut off after Moscow announced its ground forces had completed their withdrawal. China, formerly a major supplier of weapons for the resistance, ended all aid after Gorbachev's visit to Peking. As a result of congressional pressure, U.S. aid was finally resumed—but it remains erratic and inadequate.

If Moscow agrees to halt its military deliveries, it will do so only because Kabul has been supplied with everything it needs—while the resistance was being reduced to near impotence. Its stockpiles have dwindled and not been replenished; the *mujahedin* find themselves in an increasingly desperate situation, lacking not only air defense, artillery, and other essential weapons, but even such basics as mine-clearing and communications equipment and maps. "Negative symmetry" now would condemn them to destruction by the reinforced regime, possibly with the collusion of radical Islamic factions (almost the sole recipients of continuing outside aid) pursuing their own agendas. Far from offering another chance for Afghanistan, "negative symmetry" would destroy whatever hope remains.

Rosanne Klass
Freedom House
New York, N.Y.

All-Out War

Although I agree with much of Stuart Butler's call for a conservative war on poverty, I strongly disagree with his argument that conservatives should turn their backs on "white firemen" who are victimized by affirmative-action policies ["Razing the Liberal Plantation," Nov. 10]. Those white firefighters, who work hard for promotions, properly feel victimized when passed over by less-qualified minorities. For example, the white firefighters who brought suit in *Marten* v. *Wilks* faced severe discrimination under a so-called "affirmative action" plan. In 1983, the Birmingham fire department promoted two whites and three blacks to lieutenant. Out of 98 firemen who passed the test, the city promoted two whites, who ranked first and second, and then passed over more than seventy others to promote three blacks who scored 80th, 83rd, and 85th. Conservatives should speak out against this kind of discrimination, not only because it violates the principle of merit, but also because it is unjust and immoral. Affirmative-action preferences

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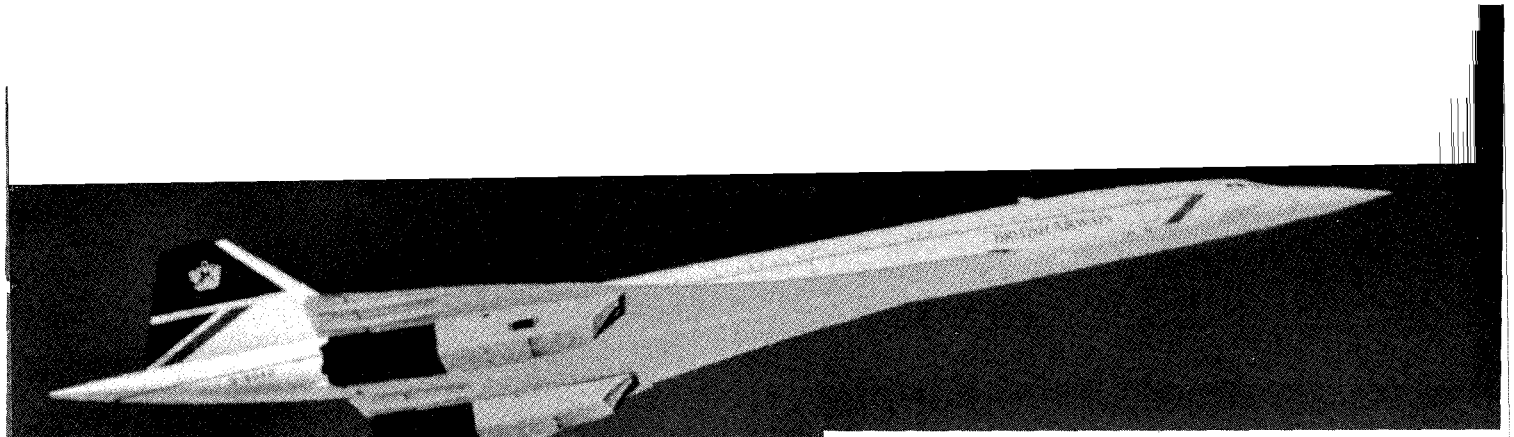

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FROM THE EDITOR

Thanks for the Intervention

■ Six years after the U.S. rescue mission, Ronald Reagan remains the most popular man in Grenada. Taxi-drivers, vendors, market traders are all happy to tell their particular horror story of the "revo" and recall their relief at the arrival of U.S. forces. Of course, life has moved on, and there was only a moderate turn-out at this year's anniversary celebration. But since the most common anti-American complaint is that there is no visa office at the new U.S. Embassy, serious disillusionment with Uncle Sam is some way off.

The "Intervention" has also been a success by more objective measures. Annual per-capita income has increased in the last decade from approximately $900 to $1,500; there is a building boom in progress; and a combination of repair work by U.S. forces (now departed) and U.S. aid has greatly improved the island's roads and communications.

Still, not everything is lovely in the Garden of Eden. The prices of Grenada's traditional crops are low and unemployment is high. Unemployment is a different concept, of course, on an island where three to four months' work can provide sufficient income for a pleasant life and a plentiful supply of the local white rum (best drunk by innocent visitors in the "calypso coffee" at Mamma's Restaurant). But the resulting "leisure ethic" is itself an obstacle to sustained economic growth—though, paradoxically, an incentive to tourists in search of a relaxing holiday. American Airlines starts a direct flight to the island next year. If Americans really like to be liked, as the saying has it, Grenada is the place to go. I particularly recommend it to veterans nostalgic for the liberation of Europe. They're still grateful in Grenada.

■ Incidentally, spellbound by the developments in Eastern Europe, we have failed to notice the political shift in the Caribbean. As Geoffrey Wagner points out in his highly entertaining *Red Calypso* (Regnery Gateway), islands which were threatened ten years ago by Cuban imperialism and the Carter Administration's permissive doctrine of "ideological pluralism" (i.e., the green light for Cuban imperialism) are today firmly in the U.S. camp. The sight of Castro's former admirer, Jamaica's Michael Manley, clad firmly in a business suit and spouting praise of free enterprise—well, it makes my day. Enjoy it while it lasts, Fidel.

■ Attentive readers of this column (Mother!) may recall my breakfast with the Hungarian *apparatchik* who forecast the imminence of Hungarian democracy. Of course, I didn't believe him—the rest is history.

Well, on the evening of Inauguration Day last January, *NR* gave a dinner in Washington at which were present such heavy hitters as Senator Malcolm Wallop, Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, and columnist William Safire. But it was the Soviet ambassador, Yuri Dubinin, who stole the show. Eating sparingly, for it was the first of three such dinners that night (Mr. Dubinin only regrets that he has but one liver to lose for his country), he fielded tough questioning on the Soviet "new thinking" in foreign policy. Would the Soviet Union stand idly by if its European satellites went to the lengths of adopting multi-party democracy? Mr. Dubinin indicated delicately that it would. Of course, we didn't believe him. Yet, again, these things are coming to pass.

Soviet weakness rather than Soviet benevolence is doubtless the underlying explanation (I always knew that the concept of "imperial overstretch" would apply to something one day). But in the light of the evidence, can we altogether exclude NATIONAL REVIEW's hospitality as an influence on world affairs? Maybe we should invite the Chinese ambassador over for take-out.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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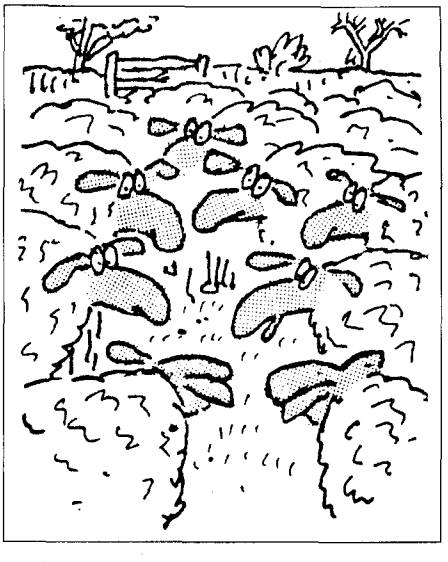
ON THE RECORD

■ Looking ahead politically: Bad news from California, where *Los Angeles Times* reports Democratic Attorney General **John Van de Kamp** has drawn even with Republican Sen. **Pete Wilson** in gubernatorial polls (44 to 43 per cent), and virtually eliminated (53 to 25 per cent) former San Francisco Mayor **Dianne Feinstein**, his most likely primary opponent. . . . But in Massachusetts, *Boston Globe* reports that "for the first time in decades" Republicans are out-registering Democrats, 2 to 1, as result of disrepute and low rating of **Dukakis** administration. . . . Chief fundraisers for conservative ex-governor **Edward King** (Democrat turned Republican) who has dropped out of race to succeed Dukakis, are now supporting conservative **Steven Pierce**, the House Minority Leader. Pierce is staunchly pro-life—which, says his primary opponent **William Weld**, pro-choice former assistant attorney general, makes him "unelectable." . . . There's talk of running *First Edition* anchor **Bill O'Reilly** against **Barney Frank** next year, but there are some problems. O'Reilly is registered as an independent, in New Jersey. . . . Incidentally, *Media Monitor*, in analysis of press treatment of congressmen with ethics problems, reports that Frank received higher positive-mention rating (41 per cent positive) than **Newt Gingrich** (40 per cent). . . . Conservative campaign strategist **Roger Stone** has told *Human Events* he might just run against Sen. **Bill Bradley** in New Jersey next year. Says Stone: "It's tempting and it would be fun." . . .Both Texas senators, Democrat **Lloyd Bentsen** and Republican **Phil Gramm**, have been spotted in Iowa recently. . . . In Connecticut mayoral elections this year, post–**Lowell Weicker** state chairman **Richard Foley** is credited with a number of Republican victories. In Bridgeport, Connecticut's largest city, Republican **Mary Moran** upset two-term Democratic mayor **Tom Bucci**.

■ **Tarrance & Associates** took poll in Virginia right after elections to determine how important abortion issue was to outcome. "Was your vote based solely on the abortion issue?" it asked. No, said 85.4 per cent of the voters; yes, said 11.8 per cent. Of the 11.8 per cent, a majority had voted for **Marshall Coleman**, the pro-life candidate. . . . In New Jersey, pro-choice forces raised a third of a million bucks for **Jim Florio**, the successful Democratic gubernatorial candidate. Pro-lifers, abandoned at the starting gate by their candidate, **Jim Courter**, sat that one out. . . . **Brent Bozell**'s *Media Watch* questions propriety of prominent national newsmen publicly supporting political candidates. *60 Minutes*' **Ed Bradley** gave $500, and **MacNeil/Lehrer**'s **Charlayne Hunter-Gault** $700, to **Doug Wilder**'s campaign in Virginia. . . . **Jesse Jackson** was cheered as he told November 12 pro-choice marchers in Washington: "We're not the puppets of the Court. Puppets do not have choices. People have choices, and that's what God has endowed us with. No one can take that away." The pre-presidential-race Jesse sang a different tune. Jackson, in *Our Sunday Visitor*, 1982: "[Legalized abortion symbolizes] a definite drift to Sodom and Gomorrah in our culture."



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"When I want to get to sleep, I count East Germans jumping over the Berlin Wall."

■ Hungary has become first Iron Curtain country to seek membership in the 23-nation Council of Europe, but the Council says formal application must await Hungary's first parliamentary elections next June. . . . Soviet Ambassador to East Germany **Vyacheslav Kochemasov** has formally protested, not the breaching of the Wall, but the fact that the USSR as an occupying power was not informed in advance that the Wall was coming down. . . . Berlin novelist **Peter Schneider** got it right. The Wall came down for the same reason that it went up, he said: to keep East Germans in. . . . Recent poll in French *Libération* indicates a surprising 63 per cent of French favor German reunification, only 16 per cent oppose it. . . . Soundings in three Western European countries in mid-October found agreement on necessity of Germany's remaining in NATO: 76 per cent in Britain think it important, as do 70 per cent in France, and 68 per cent in Italy. . . . **Fidel Castro** finds current trends in Eastern Europe lamentable. "We are witnessing sad things in other socialist countries, very sad things," he told Havana audience a fortnight ago. . . . The U.S. Communist Party also finds such changes hard to take. A *People's Daily World* editorial says **Lech Walesa** was all wet when he said Communism was imposed on Poland. "There was no 'imposed rule.' The Red Army and the Polish **Kosciuszko** Army [trained and equipped by the Soviet Union] liberated Poland from Nazism. The Polish people, seeking a break with their suffering under the pre-war capitalist and big-landowner rule, voted in a government oriented on socialism. History has naturalized socialism on Polish soil." . . . That's not how the Hungarians see it. Going the rounds in Budapest: "Communism is the long hard road between capitalism and capitalism."

■ Too good to be true. Last summer Castro banned sale of *Moscow News* in Cuba because it was too liberal. *Moscow News* stories are now being broadcast to Cuba by Voice of America's **Radio Martì**.

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THE WEEK

■ Congress may not deserve a pay raise. But the Politburo, now . . .

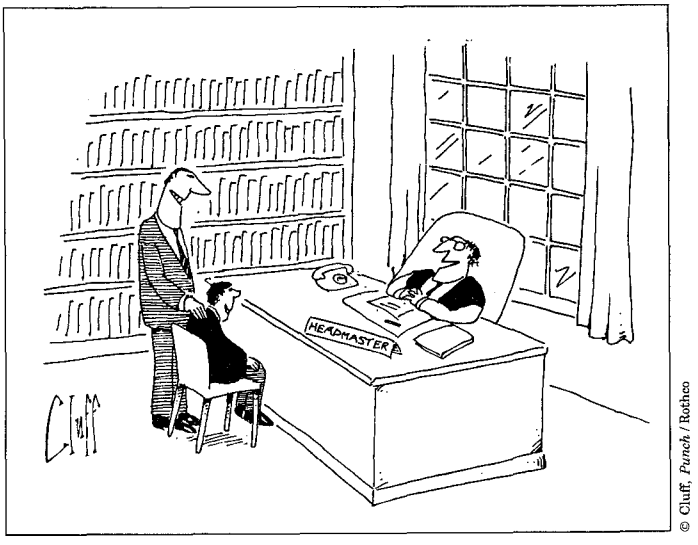
■ The savings-and-loan scandal, which has already helped end the careers of Jim Wright and Tony Coelho in the House of Representatives, may yet claim a few senators, most notably Dennis DeConcini (D., Ariz.), Alan Cranston (D., Calif.), and Don Riegle (D., Mich.). In a now-familiar story, in early 1987 DeConcini led his fellows in a campaign to pressure regulators to ignore irregularities at the failing Lincoln Savings & Loan. He even briefly convinced John Glenn (D., Ohio) and John McCain (R., Ariz.) to join in meetings with officials of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. Glenn and McCain had previously received substantial campaign contributions from Lincoln head Charles Keating, but when the regulators warned the group that they had referred the Lincoln case to the Justice Department for possible prosecution, Glenn and McCain backed off. Senator Cranston, on the other hand, proceeded to solicit and receive nearly one million dollars in campaign contributions from Keating, while Riegle and DeConcini got $78,250 and $48,000 respectively. Riegle at first played down his involvement, but is changing his story as facts continue to surface. Cranston and DeConcini are claiming they were only engaged in the usual constituent service. We believe it.

■ Senator DeConcini, you may remember, voted against Robert Bork's appointment to the Supreme Court because he feared Bork wouldn't protect the rights of his daughters. Apparently, neither daughter has a savings account. . . . But if they are taxpayers, they should know that the Lincoln bailout alone will cost $2.5 billion.

■ Jeff Alderman, chief polling analyst for ABC news, suggests the nation might be better served if TV anchors revealed their methodology and assigned a margin of error to their stories, as pollsters do. He suggested a suitable disclaimer. *Anchor:* "This report is based on the thoughts and life experiences of our political reporter, who's a liberal Democrat, and went to Swarthmore in the Sixties. . . . Most of the report was based on stuff he picked up from other reporters on the campaign trail. Since a study of our reporter's past material indicates he inserts a liberal bias into much of his material, viewers should note that we are currently assigning a margin of error of plus or minus 50 to his reports."

■ Who says A must say . . . ? Right, B. If an official of the Roman Catholic Church believes that to abort a fetus is to commit a grave sin, and if a member of his parish publicly endorses the commission of a grave sin, what is left for him to do, assuming that his responsibilities as bishop include the burden of discipline? Well, Bishop Leo Maher of San Diego last week wrote to Assemblywoman Lucy Killea and told her she was barred from receiving Communion at the church she regularly attends. Well then, why don't the other bishops do the same kind of thing—e.g., to Governor Cuomo, and Senators Kennedy and Moynihan? [See "Where We Stand," p. 25.] Answer: Different bishops behave differently. There may be a there there in Roman Catholicism, but there is no monolith. What Bishop Maher said was: "I was confronted with a particular case that the other bishops have not. I don't believe any other politician in the country has so flagrantly and blatantly and persistently taken a stand for abortion as Mrs. Lucy Killea has done." And he cited Canon 915 of the Code of Canon Law, which gives a bishop the right to deny Communion to those who "obstinately persist in manifest grave sin." One must assume that Bishop Maher (if he is bright) deeply regretted taking this action, because it is going to have the obvious political effect of enlarging the constituency of Mrs. Killea and raising the ghost of divided loyalty. But remember, you get hung at places like Nuremberg if you *don't* have divided loyalties.

■ For years the trustees of Dartmouth College have resisted cutting off investments in firms doing busi-



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"At St. Malcolm's we are justly proud of our adherence to traditional values and the perpetuation of a crass, facile, and smug middle class."

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ness with South Africa, all the while giving sound reasons for their position. A week ago, while the trustees were meeting in the college's administration building, protestors swarmed through the corridors and hectored them on the steps outside. The trustees caved in, and divested completely. A real class act, and a lesson in moral courage for the undergraduates.

■ According to a report in the current *New England Journal of Medicine*, it looks as if AIDS is being heterosexually transmitted. The report says that an African man living in Belgium transmitted the HIV virus to 11 Belgian women before dying of AIDS himself. Two of the infected women said they had had sexual relations with him only once. A California physician has documented the case of a man infecting four women with the HIV virus. After a period of relative equilibrium, the epidemic warnings are flying again.

■ The Energy Department—why on earth do we have a department screwing up energy?—decrees that appliances made after thus-and-so date will have to be thus-and-so more efficient, meaning much more efficient than manufacturers can manage. The apparent point of such interventions is to make appliance makers scream and thereby reveal themselves to the working press as being anti-everything. Starting with the environment. The item we noticed was headlined: EFFICIENCY APPLIANCES OPPOSED. Do you get the idea? Icehouses were efficient. Nature did the freezing in season and one could get a few days of food preservation with blocks of ice hewn by strong men in winter. Let's go back.

■ Nice East German chap returned some books he had borrowed from the American Memorial Library in West Berlin, and had been unable to return for 28 years.

■ China is considering sex education for primary schools on the very same grounds that were used here, namely, that kids haven't figured it out yet, which they aren't supposed to anyway, because when they do, there goes planned parenthood, and this is a country whose planning already uses forced abortion and sterilization to depopulate by enforcing a limit of one child per two parents, another bad idea that isn't working, and things are about to get worse. If anybody understands this paragraph, please write us.

■ Be on the watch for the lively new five-minute daily "Headline Exchange" debate between NATIONAL REVIEW and *New Republic* editors, on Fridays at 4:45 P.M. EST on National Public Radio. James Roberts, president of Radio America, a new public-affairs syndicate, believes "Headline Exchange" will attract an enthusiastic audience. It will feature, for *NR*, Bill Buckley, John O'Sullivan, Wick Allison, Rick Brookhiser, Joe Sobran, and Bill McGurn; and for *The New Republic*, Jeff Dearth, Rick Hertzberg, Mickey Kaus, Morton Kondracke, Fred Barnes, Jacob Weisberg, and Leon Wieseltier. Phil Nicolaides will be the moderator. If your local NPR station doesn't carry the show, you might just give it a nudge.

■ An independent organization has been formed to combat "the onslaught of modernist and nihilist intellectuals" that currently plagues universities and schools with Sixties ideology and pop culture. The organization is the National Humanities Institute (214 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Suite 470, Washington, D.C. 20002), chaired by Claes Ryn of Catholic University. The raison d'être of the Institute, which publishes a quarterly bulletin, *Humanitas*, is to "promote significant research, publication, and teaching in the humanities, including the social sciences properly conceived," and "to contribute to the reinvigoration and development of the principles upon which Western civilization is based." Radical concept.

■ Alexander Theroux is a novelist and a lecturer in English at Yale, and wow! is he in trouble. Theroux heard a black Harvard psychiatrist, Alvin Poussaint, discussing, on the David Brinkley show, the attack on the Central Park jogger. Poussaint described the rapists as "angry." Theroux interpreted this as a defense of the rapists, and fired off a letter to Poussaint describing the rapists as "monkeys." Poussaint sent the letter to the *Boston Globe*, screaming, of course, "Racism!" Two comments. 1) It is remarkable how often academic disputes these days end up with charges of "racism," with very few steps in between. 2) Calling the rapists monkeys is unfair to monkeys, who tend not to be nihilistic teenage thugs.

■ Was it only last year that we kept hearing about the Massachusetts Miracle? These days, the Commonwealth's bond rating ties with Louisiana for last place. Not to worry, though; at a meeting of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, board member Robert Ciolek announced a solution: "I move we change our name to the California Water Resources Authority."

■ Elsewhere in the local news, the city fathers of Muskegon Heights, Michigan, voted themselves $250 custom-tailored blazers and a new local income tax, whichever comes first.

■ All those nice things Walter Duranty was saying about the Soviet Union in the *New York Times* half

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a century ago are finally coming true. Life imitates art.

■ Alexander Cockburn, Gus Hall, and Angela Davis must be learning what Father Feeney felt like when he discovered the Catholic Church had committed heresy.

■ On the local front, the town of Flossmoor, Illinois, is waging full-scale war on the owner of a pickup truck, the likes of which are banned as unsightly in Flossmoor, and what would anybody expect from a town named Flossmoor? In Flossmoor it was illegal until this year even to own a truck—"What will happen to property values?"—but ownership is now legal provided you keep the thing in a garage. But what happens if your garage suffers damage and you have to park in the driveway for a few weeks? That is the issue. The owner of the well-maintained small truck in question keeps parking the vehicle in his own driveway and keeps getting ticketed for doing so by local officious. Remember the name: Flossmoor. If you have outgrown property rights as well as the Constitution and pickup trucks, it sounds like a fine place to settle. Flossmoor, Illinois.

■ Comandante Ortega's "very positive" rating in a recent poll was 1 per cent. Did some pollster talk to a professor?

■ Think twice about giving the police a tip about a criminal. If you get a reward, it's taxable.

And after Prague?

In 1956, he would have been shot. In 1989, he would be a hero of *glasnost*. Coming as he did in 1968, between the two moments, he was deposed and his reforms were crushed, but he himself was spared, to work for two decades as a forestry-department functionary in Bratislava—until, now, he is a hero. Alexander Dubcek is addressing crowds. Sometimes, there is justice in the world.

The Czech events—latest in the series—call to mind an argument that the Czech émigré Milan Kundera and the Soviet émigré Joseph Brodsky conducted in the *New York Times Book Review* several years back, about how their part of the world had reached its present state—which was, indirectly, an argument about what its subsequent state should be. Kundera, writing about his literary hero, Diderot, blamed the aborting of the Prague Spring on the Dostoyevskyan character of the Russian people—Orthodox, mystical, obscurantist. Brodsky, a devout Christian, shot back that since the Iron Curtain was the work of Marxism, itself an offshoot of the Enlightenment, when one saw tanks in the streets of Prague, there was just as much reason to think of Diderot as of Dostoyevsky.

Now that we see half-million-strong demonstrations in the streets of Prague—and Budapest, and who knows where next—kindred questions arise. What are we to think of now? Social democracy; socialism (or capitalism) "with a human face"; "third ways," clerical or secular? Or rights, economic and religious? Will Eastern Europe learn, as the English-speaking world and (after much ado) France learned, that Christianity and freedom can be mutually buttressing forces, not enemies?

For forty years, Communism stifled or marginalized political discussion in half of Europe. Now that Communism is in retreat, serious politics—meaning questions of human nature and the state, rather than such chestnuts as the German Question, or Whither NATO—comes to the fore. What will Eastern Europeans do after the last demonstration?

Their record on these questions has not been too good, quite apart from the pummelings the region has taken from Germany and Russia over the years. We wish them the best.

Cheney's Pre-Emptive Strike

Some months back, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney—the hard-nosed former congressman chosen to head the Pentagon after the John Tower fiasco—was rebuked from on high for expressing doubts about the cutbacks in Soviet defense spending Mikhail Gorbachev was claiming. There was no evidence of any diminution in the numbers of modern planes, tanks, and ships the Soviets were producing, said Cheney.

Accordingly, it was a cause of alarm in conservative circles last week when Cheney became the Administration's point man in calling for sharp cuts in U.S. forces in Europe and sharper cuts still in the defense budgets for 1992–94—cuts to total $180 billion. Thus far the Bush Administration had played it cool, muting its satisfaction at the ongoing dismemberment of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, unwilling to be stampeded into underwriting what may or may not be a successful democratic, free-market counter-revolution in Poland, Hungary, and East Germany. By raising the ante, so to speak, Secretary Cheney could be seen as giving comfort to the instant-disarmament forces. But was he?

Domestically, Mr. Cheney could be engaged in a pre-emptive strike, throwing down the gauntlet to Congress, telling it, in effect: We, the military, will come up with major cuts—cuts in manpower, cuts in bases and airfields, cuts in procurement, cuts in weapons systems—that will pare down and stream-

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line our armed forces without sacrificing the deterrent capabilities that have kept this nation and the Western world free for 44 years. You, Congress, for your part, must put political considerations aside and permit us to phase out bases—even in Texas and California—and to cut out plane, tank, and helicopter procurement whether or not it causes unemployment—even in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. He could be putting Congress on notice that the political shenanigans that caused the restoration of the V-22 Osprey aircraft and production of a tank the Army didn't want last time around could be dangerous to the political health of some congressmen. Cheney's proposals, following revised U.S. intelligence findings of real cutbacks in Soviet defense spending, will have a longer than usual shelf-life on the nation's TV screens and front pages, since he spoke out when Congress was preoccupied with its rush to adjournment. Assuming that major defense cuts were inevitable, given the budget crunch and the fluidity of developments in Central Europe, the Administration may have seized the initiative from Congress.

Strategically, the Cheney proposals provide President Bush with negotiating chips for the Malta summit with Mikhail Gorbachev, at which proposals for weighted slashes in conventional forces in Europe will be on the agenda. But the primary responsibility of the Administration now is to remind the U.S. public that the Soviet Union a) has not disarmed, and b) has a finger, however relaxed at the moment, poised over the button that would activate the weightiest aggressive arsenal ever accumulated.

El Salvador: Keep Your Eye on the Ball

KARL MARX was only half right. History can occur first as farce, and then again as farce. What we are now witnessing in El Salvador is an attempt to replay the Vietnam farce.

In Vietnam, the Vietcong had no chance of winning on the ground. They could murder some mayors and schoolteachers but they could not seize and hold anything important. But their handlers had a good idea: if they couldn't win the war in Saigon, they would win it in the United States. We now know that many, if not all, of the Buddhist monks who immolated themselves in flames were drugged and programmed. Their "final statements" were written for them and mimeographed. The press was alerted to the forthcoming "suicide," time and place. Never mind. It was socko in America, and led to the overthrow of the Diem government, a succession of Abbott-and-Costello governments in Saigon, and the Americanization of the war.

The great Tet offensive of 1968 was a disaster for the Vietcong, effectively wiping them out as a fighting force. Never mind. It was a media success, shifting the political balance in the U.S. against the war. To snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, it only remained for Congress to deny ammunition to the South Vietnamese Army and for the North Vietnamese Army to launch a conventional tank and rocket attack, winning the war.

The recent uprising of the FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador was Tet all over again. As in the real Tet, what the guerrillas could not win on the ground they hoped to win in the United States. Their attack was aimed above all at the left wing of the Democratic Party, and the message was: The war cannot be won.

The six murdered Jesuits are the Buddhist bonzes in this scenario. It is possible that they were killed by rightists. However, on the principle of *cui bono?* (who benefits?) it is also possible that they were killed by Communists wearing army uniforms. Certainly the deaths of the Salvador Six help the Communist side in the American political equation. (On August 29, 1939, Hitler concocted a Polish invasion of Germany by dressing concentration-camp inmates in Polish uniforms and shooting them at the border. Claiming Polish aggression, Hitler sent his Panzers in on September 1.)

It is not surprising that, as in Tet, the guerrilla surge in El Salvador produced no popular uprising. The president of El Salvador, Alfredo Cristiani, won office in an internationally supervised election. The Communists refused to participate in the election, knowing very well that they could not receive even 10 per cent of the vote.

The "Tet" in El Salvador was probably a desperation venture. The Communist strategists must have been aware that their support from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is no longer absolutely assured. No foreseeable Czech or East German government is likely to be interested in Central American insurgencies, though Nicaragua is a faithful supplier, as the downed plane with its cargo of high-tech weapons dramatically illustrated.

There are two additional factors that were present in Vietnam but are missing from the Salvadoran equation. 1) There is no equivalent of the North

It Probably Means Nothing

I note, but just in passing, that
The Bundestag, which tipped its hat
Toward East Berlin, paused also to
Sing "*Deutschland über Alles*" through.

W. H. VON DREELE

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Vietnamese regular army on hand. 2) President Bush is not distracted by a Watergate fiasco.

The last best hope of the Communist guerrillas in El Salvador will inevitably be a cry for "negotiations," which will echo in the halls of Congress, megaphoned by the left wing of the Democratic Party and the left wing of the Catholic and Methodist churches, and by such Neanderthals as former ambassador Robert White, all of them midwives of tyranny.

Don't Keelhaul The Boat People

FOR THE last two months a London libel court has been hearing horrifying accounts of how British troops forcibly returned Russian and Yugoslav refugees to torture and mass murder at the hands of Stalin and Tito in 1945. The case being heard will determine whether Lord Aldington, then a senior British officer, bears a degree of personal responsibility for such horrors that would justify Count Nicholas Tolstoy's description of him as a "war criminal." Whatever the merits of this accusation, no one today disputes that the deportations themselves were a great historical crime.

Yet Mrs. Thatcher's government is proposing to repeat that crime by forcibly returning Vietnamese boat people from Hong Kong to Communist Vietnam. Over the objections of the Bush Administration, the British campaigned successfully at the Geneva conference on refugees in July for a joint plan, under United Nations auspices, of bribing Vietnam to repress emigration more brutally and of half bribing, half coercing the "orderly return" of those refugees who have managed to escape. With an almost magnificent disregard for symbolism, this forcible repatriation is expected to coincide with the start of the Christmas season.

Various casuistries are used to justify the proposed crime. A distinction is drawn between "political refugees," who are given asylum, and "economic migrants," who are to be returned. Legitimate refugees are those who can show they face "persecution" at home. But this distinction (as well as undercutting everything Mrs. Thatcher has ever said about freedom and Communism) ignores the reality of totalitarian regimes like Vietnam's, where persecution is directed not just against particular groups or "political" dissidents but against the whole population. And if a man is fleeing from state-induced starvation, is he an "economic migrant" undeserving of sympathy? Would Mrs. Thatcher have returned victims fleeing from Stalin's deliberately induced famine in the Ukraine? We hope not.

As it happens, however, these shifty evasions have been dispelled by the Vietnamese regime itself. *NR*'s William McGurn, writing in the January *Commentary*, quotes a senior Hanoi official as threatening penalties against those forced to return after refusing to do so voluntarily—which makes every boat person a potential "political refugee" on the strictest definition.

If Mrs. Thatcher remains determined to stain her reputation in history, her friends must hold her back. Let the Bush Administration offer to match any generosity to the boat people that the British manage to summon up. And if that incentive looks likely to be refused in favor of a bilateral Hanoi–Whitehall deal on forced repatriation, Washington might usefully threaten to protect the $6-billion U.S. investment in Hong Kong by bilateral conversations of its own with Mainland China. That should concentrate London's mind wonderfully.

Soviet Economy: Oxymoron?

THE COLLAPSE of the Soviet economy, and of similar economies in Eastern Europe, is not entirely different from what has happened to many countries in Latin America and Africa. Every country that experimented with nationalized industries and highly regimented, top-down "planning" soon found waste, inefficiency, and corruption draining the government budget. These countries also discovered that government enterprises and regulatory bureaus are inherently inflexible and invariably overstaffed. Erecting trade barriers to protect the inefficient state industries simply kept costs high and living standards low.

What *all* the world's most distressed economies have had in common, whether nominally capitalist or socialist, was a deadly combination of steeply progressive income taxes and perpetually debauched currencies. Repeated devaluations fed high inflation, which would have pushed nearly everyone into the highest tax brackets, except that taxpayers are never that docile. Instead, people either put their best efforts into the "underground" economy, or didn't really work at all. Taxable income and sales vanished, just as state spending was soaring to

From Moscow with Love

Enmeshed in the crash, El Salvador found
SAM-7s galore spread over the ground,
Providing for once some evidence that,
Like trout in the milk, suggests there's a rat.

W. H. VON DREELE

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subsidize nationalized companies or to pay inflated interest rates on the national debt. All of this meant further budget deficits, which, because of chronic devaluation, could not possibly be financed by issuing bonds. So the printing presses ran overtime, further eroding the currency, mangling the tax system, and bloating interest expense.

The Soviet situation has all of these familiar destructive elements, plus a few more. More prices are set by fiat in the Soviet Union than anywhere else. In addition, whenever the Soviet budget has been in deficit, the Kremlin has financed the whole gap by printing more money, never by selling bonds to the public. Aside from foreign debt, the Soviet "national debt" consists of increasingly worthless cash used to "pay" the Soviet people. Defaulting on that debt, through repressed inflation, is very dangerous.

Soviet reformers at least understand that they have to allow private cooperatives to remedy the chronic shortages left by unwieldy state enterprises. After a public protest over a proposed 90 per cent tax rate on profits from such co-ops, their tax will apparently be limited to 50 to 60 per cent. But individuals who work in such enterprises are also uniquely punished by an additional tax rate of up to 60 per cent on their salaries (while managers of state enterprises pay no more than a 13 per cent tax). With the ruble actually worth less than a dime, these steep tax rates now come into play at extremely modest income levels. The punitive tax keeps entrepreneurs underground; but staying underground requires too much invisibility to help with conspicuous shortages, and their enterprises yield virtually nothing to the state. Similar discriminatory tax penalties sabotage President Gorbachev's otherwise sensible efforts to lease farms.

The Soviet "price system" is mainly a tax and subsidy system. That is, prices have been kept high on most things in order to generate profits for high-cost state enterprises, or to collect turnover taxes, since these are by far the greatest sources of government revenue. Those who talk about the political impossibility of decontrolling ridiculously *low* prices, for rents or subways, never consider the popularity of reducing many more artificially *high* prices. Waiting in line for things that are priced too low, and often getting nothing at all at those low prices, is not something Soviet consumers like any more than anyone else would. Substituting a coherent income- and sales-tax system for the current system of selective exploitation of consumers would bring many more overpriced goods within the workers' reach, giving them something to work for. Income from personal or cooperative enterprises could be taxed at the same 13 per cent rate paid by those who work for state enterprises, and people could be freed from the obligation to work at a state job if they have a co-op job. Finally, the only conceivable way to establish any sort of credible monetary system in a country with no market for bonds is, as Federal Reserve Governor Wayne Angell has suggested, to guarantee to redeem rubles for gold. Ideological Marxists shouldn't have any problems with a gold standard. Whether they can tolerate letting clever Soviet entrepreneurs enrich themselves by remedying shortages remains to be seen. If not, the Soviet economy will just continue to be a banana republic without bananas.

Leonard Boudin, R I P

LEONARD BOUDIN, a reasonable man would guess, was pro-Communist. Granted that everyone charged with a crime is entitled to a lawyer; still, the clients he sought out were distinctive. In case after case, he defended those whose work helped the Communist movement. As recently as last year, he addressed a conference gathered at Harvard to inquire not into the causes of Communism, but into the causes of "Anti-Communism in the United States." The planted axiom of that meeting was that anyone who had engaged in anti-Communist activity was a crypto-fascist. When *Washington Post* correspondent Carl Bernstein got up to assert that in fact the press in the United States was free, and was not engaged in anti-Soviet conspiracy, he was roundly booed. The grand irony of it all is that that meeting, denouncing anti-Communism, could not now safely be held in the capital cities of Eastern Europe.

And Leonard Boudin certainly suffered for his cause. His daughter Kathy evidently over-learned from her father, because, instead of merely defending Communism, she became a Weatherman, dynamiting and burning, and ending up in a federal prison, sentenced to twenty years, leaving in the wake of her activity one dead Brink's guard.

Leonard Boudin will be missed by his friends—everyone has friends—and missed by his professional clients. Granted, the Communist Party, U.S.A., may grow up morally one of these days, taking lessons from home in Moscow. But that won't happen until Gus Hall dies or retires to Cuba or Albania. Hall—an old friend and admirer of Leonard Boudin—deplores the changes going on behind the shredding Iron Curtain.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Have you ever had an idea you could not put aside as quickly as you would like? I keep thinking

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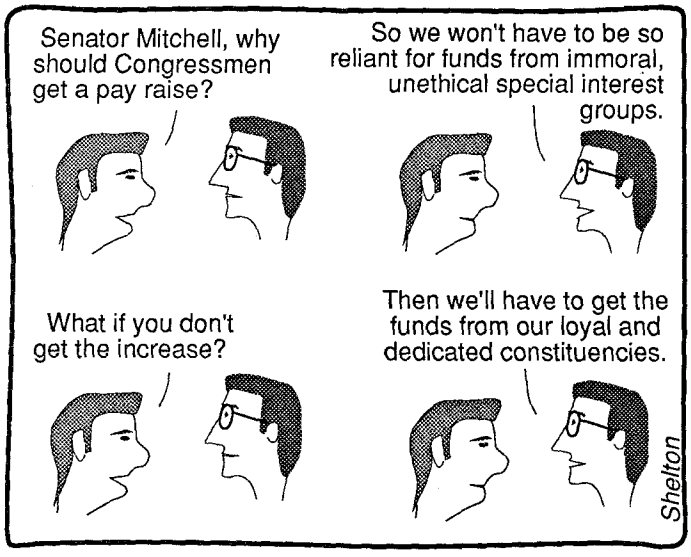
Senator Mitchell, why should Congressmen get a pay raise?
So we won't have to be so reliant for funds from immoral, unethical special interest groups.
What if you don't get the increase?
Then we'll have to get the funds from our loyal and dedicated constituencies.
Shelton

about the United Nations headquarters in Hong Kong by 1997. Free port for freebooters? It seems part silly goose and part wise owl. Observance of Confucian cardinal virtues mandatory?

Sincerely,
D. Byrd Bulkeley
Swoope, Va.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

For the past several years my motivation in life has been a determined pursuit of admittance to Yale. I am a senior in high school, with an A average and very high SAT scores. My transcript shows many honors courses weighted in math and science. I hope to major in chemistry. My sights were set high and I was shooting for the top, I believed; when I came across Jeffrey Hart's column "Is Yale Now Colored Mauve?" [Oct. 9, 1987], I was disturbed. Well, I thought, they'll surely send the gays elsewhere before I get there, or maybe I'll consider my second choice, Dartmouth, more carefully. My newspaper experience in high school might help me get a place on the staff of the *Dartmouth Review*. But then [May 13, 1988], oh no! Mr. Hart again! This time, "Scuba Diving in the Cesspool"; my two schools have further distanced themselves from a state of grace.

Since my parents get first dibs on each new issue of *NR*, they know all the gory details before I do. After due consideration, comes now their ruling: I may not apply to Yale *because I might get in*! Ditto Dartmouth.

Are there any Ivy League schools where a traditional girl can pursue both a higher education and cute boys who may be fun, but not gay?

Very sincerely in need of your help,
Julie E. Klare
Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Miss Klare: We are looking into the question. We have applied for a grant to the National Endowment for the Humanities. Just to repeat: You want a) an Ivy League school that isn't b) a liberal indoctrinating machine, and c), except for that, is normal. Will advise. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Please do one of the following: 1) make the Trans-O-Gram easier; 2) eliminate it; 3) put the solution in the same issue so I can cheat.

The challenge is irresistible but I don't have the time.

Sincerely,
Eileen March
Beverly Hills, Calif.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

An unsigned item in the August 4 issue (p. 11) noted that Mr. Carlos Menem, the new president of Argentina, is among the few palindromes holding political office. Your short list did not include the congressman from Hawaii, Daniel Akaka (D.).

Best regards,
Tom Wyrick
Springfield, Mo.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Concerning your perennial fiscal difficulties (of which you are kind enough to inform me rather regularly), I believe that there is succor just over the horizon. The following is offered in the spirit of that old saw: if you're not liberal at 25 you have no heart; if you're not conservative at fifty you have no brains.

The Demographics Are on Your Side

NATIONAL REVIEW is quite a hit
With those of us who have aged a bit;
But those among the boom of babies
Act as if it had the rabies.
So what to do? Just wait for tempus to fugit.

So don't despair, hang in there, and you'll be OK when they start to lose their hair.

Regards,
John M. Bolger
Marion, Mass.

P.S. You will discern that this contribution is offered in lieu of one financial.

Dear Mr. Bolger: There are two problems here. The first is that by the time they lose their hair, I shall have to dust returned. The second problem is that while we all enjoy your versification, it is positively DEMORALIZING to suggest that this is an adequate substitute for *cold hard cash of the kind you use to pay the printer!* Cordially, **—WFB**

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Avoiding the Burtonmander

SUSAN MANDEL

When Marshall Coleman and Jim Courter lost the Virginia and New Jersey gubernatorial races, they lost more than two governorships. They also lost a few Republican seats in Congress, seats the GOP will now have little chance of capturing for the remainder of this century. That's because Democrats will now control the post-Census redistricting in both states and are bound to continue the gerrymandering that helps guarantee their 35-year-old majority in the House. The 1989 and 1990 state elections are crucial for this reason: the victors will draw the lines for congressional elections beginning with 1992.

Creative redrawing of the electoral map in 1981 was the biggest factor in preserving the Democratic majority in the House. In the 1982 elections, Republicans had expected to gain at least six seats because of migration from the inner cities of the Northeast to suburbia and to the conservative Sunbelt states. But blatant gerrymandering neutralized this factor and, along with the recession, was responsible for the catastrophic loss of 26 seats.

"If you control the line-drawing process, to a large degree you can control the outcome of congressional elections," says the director of strategic information for the Republican National Committee, David Winston. The Democrats controlled that process in 1981, and they played hardball.

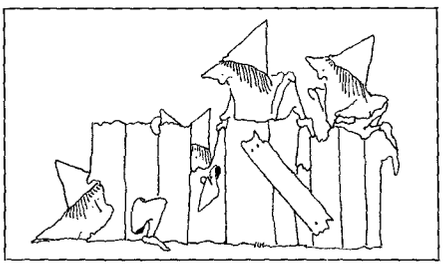
Nowhere did they play more ruthlessly than in California, the state with the most seats in Congress. An hour before he was to turn his office over to a Republican on January 2, 1983, Democratic Governor Jerry Brown signed a redistricting plan essentially the same as the one voters had just rejected in a referendum, with a few cosmetic changes made by the legislature. The mastermind behind this effort was Congressman Phil Burton. [See John Fund, "Beware the Gerrymander, My Son," April 7, 1989.]

The upshot was that in the 1984 elections Republican candidates won a majority of the votes but only 40 per cent of the state's seats in Congress. Of the 135 congressional races in California since 1982, although the GOP has spent $20 million, only one seat has moved back from the Democratic to the Republican column. It's another example of how the voter can be removed from the political process. "The most influential person in California is still Phil Burton even though he's been dead several years," says David Winston.

RNC Chairman Lee Atwater has made redistricting the RNC's number-one priority, and the party is pouring money into state races. Despite losing the Virginia governorship, for example, the GOP did pick up five or six new seats in the Virginia House (the final number is hanging on a recount). That gives the party nearly 40 per cent of the legislature's seats.

Nevertheless, Republicans nationwide are not in a good position to force a compromise. In states where they have any power it's only by their fingertips, usually controlling only one body of the state legislature or holding the governorship. The party must, at a minimum, hang onto Republican governorships in California, Florida, Texas, and Illinois and State Senate majorities in New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, and Iowa—all states that stand to gain or lose seats in the upcoming reapportionment.

Were the GOP to lose any of these branches of state government, Democrats would have a free hand to carve out Burtonian gerrymanders. This is why the White House is livid with Senator Pete Wilson, who is running for governor of California next year. He has just co-sponsored an extreme pro-abortion bill in the Senate—effectively legislating *Roe* v. *Wade*—which will bring a primary challenge next year and may alienate enough pro-lifers to bring about the same kind of defeat Republicans saw in both Virginia and New Jersey. If he loses, Republicans can say goodbye to about eight seats in the House.



"If we're going to keep sitting on this fence, I don't think we should defer maintenance any longer."

The point hasn't been lost on the companies that sell redistricting software. This is the latest gadget, given an airing at a recent meeting of the National Conference of State Legislators in Newport Beach, California. The software would give legislators who are far less adept than Phil Burton the technology to redraw their state districts on the California model. It takes much of the guesswork out of gerrymandering, with programs sophisticated enough to show how moving a district line by just one block can alter the ethnic breakdown, income level, and voting record of the entire district.

Democrats will need all the state-of-the-art help they can get to counter Republican population gains, even more pronounced today than a decade ago. But there's no lack of will. "Democrats are quite capable of drawing bizarre districts that will increase their numbers in Congress in a lot of states," says the co-chairman of the House Republican Conference's task force on redistricting, Bill Thomas (Calif.). "Don't sit back and think the Democrats can't do it—they can. Democrats aren't going to give up real political power. It has to be taken away from them." This will involve, among other things, challenging Democratic excesses in the courts.

However, as Tom Hofeller, redistricting director for the National Republican Congressional Committee, points out, "Gerrymandering is the only legal form of vote-stealing left today." Republicans can protest all they want, but they can hardly rely on the courts to bail them out in the all-important state races, particularly if GOP candidates self-destruct as they did this time around. In politics, winners take all. □

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The Rebirth of History

BRIAN CROZIER

THE MORE the tidings pour in from what used to be the Eastern Bloc, the more convinced I am that what we are witnessing is not Mr. Francis Fukuyama's "End of History" but its rebirth.

The wrong turning History took in 1917 led—over the bodies of millions who died in vain—to a whole series of dead-ends. History abhors the cul-de-sac, as Nature the vacuum. Marx's absurd inversion of Hegel's dialectic so inspired Lenin (History's great culprit) that he proceeded to demonstrate, by force, the truth of Marx's untruth. It is this perversion of the historical process that is now coming to an end.

Of course there will be false restarts; the engines will stall here and there, misfire, go into reverse. Of course the ignorant and short-sighted among our leaders, in business even more than in politics, will do their worst to delay the rebirth; but I doubt that even their worst can halt it altogether.

In different words, both President Bush and Prime Minister Thatcher have wished President Gorbachev well, or hoped he will "succeed," or offered to "help" him. The Irish ex-diplomat Conor Cruise O'Brien has been calling for a kind of Marshall Plan to help the Soviet leader. He at least has defined what he means by "help."

Why not take Mikhail Gorbachev at his word? After all, our collective failure to take Hitler at his word turned out to be pretty costly. So, what does the man say, and not merely say but repeat *ad nauseam*? His book, *Perestroika*, and his speeches are simply peppered with references to, and indeed invocations of, Lenin. Marx and Marxism? He hardly mentions them.

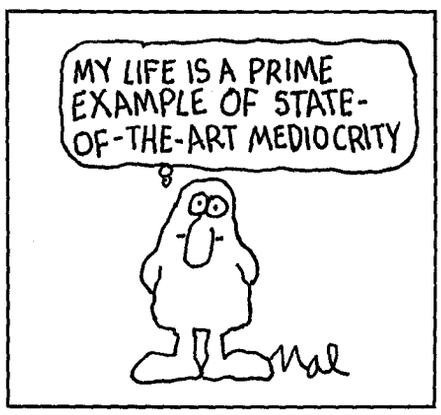
The point, always, for Gorbachev is to make a fresh start—to go back to the way Lenin wanted things done before his successors went astray. *That* is the point of *perestroika*.

Obligingly, he comes close to spelling it out. He dismisses political pluralism as "rubbish." He reaffirms the "leading role" of the Party. It should not be necessary, at this late stage of the non-history that began in 1917, to explain what Leninism means, but it evidently is.

At home, Leninism means the sovereignty of the Party. Once in power, the Party has the absolute right to stay there forever. Moreover, it is infallible; in other words, it is right even when it tacitly recognizes that it has been wrong by changing its "line." At that point, Party members who advocated the wrong line have to be purged or punished, since the Party can never be wrong.

That is why current events in the USSR itself and in Eastern Europe [see "In the Bloc," p. 20] are so momentous, and so exhilarating. The striking coalminers in the Soviet Arctic called for a revision of Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution (Brezhnev's creation, by the way). That is the Article that enshrines the Party's "leading role." In East Germany, the anti-regime demonstrators—those of them who remain in the country—are also calling for the Party to drop its claim to a leading role. In other words, to cease being a Leninist Party as Gorbachev understands the term.

In Hungary, it has already happened, with the truly historic decision of the ruling Socialist Workers' Party to vote itself out of existence. Poland hasn't gone that far, in a formal sense, but the Party has, very reluctantly, handed the reins of power (perhaps temporarily) to the Solidarity trade-union organization.



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Last month, the Warsaw Pact (the Soviet Union included) pledged respect for the right of member-states to go their own way "with no external interference." This sounds like an end to the Brezhnev Doctrine but it isn't, quite. It would still be open to a newly self-confident Politburo in Moscow to put its own man in power in a rebellious satellite (as happened in Afghanistan) so that he could call in the Red Army to do the dirty work of repression.

Let us add at once that at the present stage of bankruptcy, chaos, and systemic decadence in the original home of "socialism," any such move seems almost infinitely remote. Which brings me to that other essential element of Leninism: the duty to extend Soviet-style Communism to "all countries of the world, without exception." There you have another "right" that has not been formally renounced (what true Leninist *could* renounce it?), although it lies in tatters.

IN THIS context, however, do remember Brest–Litovsk. Brest–What? some may ask. On February 13, 1987, Gorbachev stunned an audience of Soviet media and propaganda organs by citing the Treaty of Brest–Litovsk, imposed by the victorious Germans on Lenin's fledgling regime in March 1918. Obliged to accept the terms, Lenin described them as "obscene, foul, and humiliating."

Interpreting Gorbachev's reference, his close advisor Aleksandr Yakovlev explained the parallel. Brest–Litovsk, he said, showed how short-term interests could be sacrificed to secure vital interests. In other words, comrades, just hang on and we'll live to fight another day . . .

Let Hungary be the criterion. If Gorbachev, or Yeltsin, or some other Soviet leader should announce the dissolution of the Party and the abandonment of Leninism, then of course we should rush in with aid; just as, today, the West is under a moral obligation to help the Hungarians and the Poles.

But the peoples of the USSR will not thank the West if we help to prolong Communist rule there. Let History's rebirth go ahead, unhindered by our blindness. □

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J. MADISON

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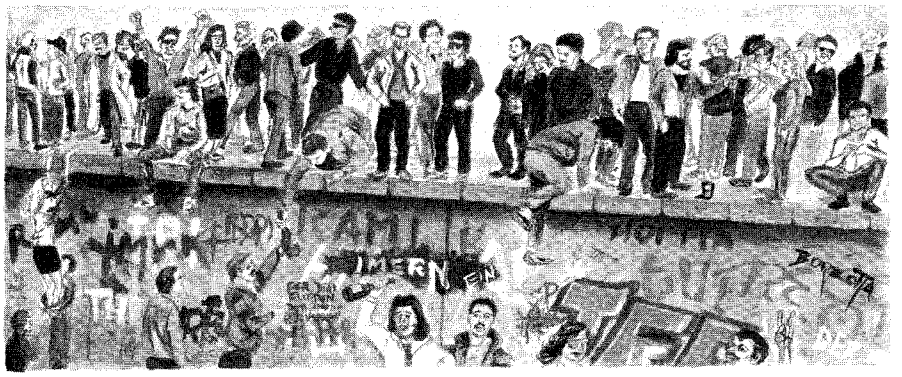
The Party at the Wall

BENNETT OWEN



Joseph Borzotta

WEST BERLIN—It began as a trickle. On East German TV, a government spokesman had ended an evening press conference by saying that citizens of the GDR could travel freely, and by 9:30 P.M. on November 9, the first East Berliners strolled across a bridge at Bornholmer Strasse. They'd heard the news in a bar and walked down to the nearest crossing to see if it was really true. It was. A small crowd greeted them as they reached the Western side. "May I come in?" asked one politely.

"To walk across this bridge into West Berlin is the most normal thing in the world," one man said—and then added, "things haven't been normal here for 28 years." A youngster coming across pointed to the Wall he'd just passed through and commented, "This used to be the end of the world for us." At first, most said they just wanted to come over and walk on the Kurfürstendamm, Berlin's answer to Fifth Avenue. But as the news spread, the border crossings quickly became jammed with people. The soldiers who once had orders to shoot to kill were reduced to stamping passports and directing traffic. They laughed when asked if they'd been handed their pink slips yet. By midnight, the celebration had begun in earnest. Thousands of Germans from East and West gathered at the Brandenburg Gate, drinking cheap champagne just steps away from crosses commemorating those whose dreams of freedom couldn't wait this long.

"I have seen the future and it runs through the heart of Berlin." Through that kind of graffiti the Berlin Wall spoke with cynical eloquence, and last January, in the icy half-light of winter in Berlin, it appeared to say that the cold war was as cold as ever. George Shultz, on a final tour of Europe as Secretary of State, declared the Wall should come down. East Germany's Erich Honecker defiantly replied that it would be standing one hundred years from now, and at the same time a series of incidents dramatically underscored his words. Two young men who tried to flee across the Wall in the southern part of town were shot (one of them fatally), and in the days following, more shots were heard at border crossings in other parts of the city. In late January a man tried to swim to the West across the River Spree in the center of town. He made it to the western shore but was exhausted, and as he tried to pull himself from the water East German soldiers pulled him into their patrol boat by the hair. The border guards were taking their orders from the East German chief of security, a dedicated Marxist by the name of Egon Krenz.

Despite the show of force, escape attempts were a daily occurrence. Of the dozens who tried through the winter and spring of this year, two spectacular attempts come to mind. In one, a would-be escapee was killed when he fell from a makeshift hot-air balloon. In another, two brothers living in West Germany flew two ultralight planes into East Germany where they picked up a third brother and flew him back to freedom. By the end of summer, though, that kind of desperation had evaporated as East Germans by the hundreds of thousands made an end-run through Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Egon Krenz became the new leader of East Germany, but, as a West German magazine put it, he is a shepherd without a flock. Desperately (and futilely, as later events have shown) seeking to regain control of his people, he threw open the Berlin Wall.

And so, on a crisp autumn night, a newspaper headline screams, "Berlin is Berlin again." Just after midnight on November 10, a very stout and very drunk reveler climbed onto the wall and, with the Brandenburg Gate as a backdrop, withstood the East German water cannon that tried to force him off. In freezing weather, he turned his back to the jets of water, and when the guards finally gave up, he turned toward them, unzipped his fly and . . . well, you know. As dramatic symbolism it doesn't quite equal staring down a tank in Tiananmen Square, but the Germans applauded wildly.

By Friday evening, Berlin was pure and simple chaos, its population swollen by a half-million East Germans with more pouring in every minute. At Checkpoint Charlie, a seemingly unending river of champagne poured over the cars as they came through, and the mood was euphoric. On the dark and muddy pathway that follows the Wall from Checkpoint Charlie to the Brandenburg Gate, there was a constant clinking of claw-hammers against cement as Berliners chipped away souvenirs. In the morning, jackhammers would take their place, opening up new crossings and making

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old roads and rail lines whole again. The surest sign that history was being made was at the Brandenburg Gate, where, thirty feet above the throngs of people in a cherry-picker, stood Dan Rather speaking into a video camera. Back on earth were ABC and NBC, and CNN seemed to be everywhere at once. By Saturday, more than a million guests had invaded Berlin—a newspaper cartoon showed an East German family running through a checkpoint, with a caption that read, "Quick, before the West Germans build a wall."

The most emotional event took place Sunday, when the Wall fell at Potsdamer Platz. The rest of the world sees the Brandenburg Gate as the symbol of Berlin, but those who live here remember Potsdamer Platz as the heart of the old city. It was there where, in 1945, Soviet tanks crushed the last life out of the Third Reich, and where, in 1953, the uprising of June 17 was quelled. Now, the army that built the Wall is busy tearing holes in it. As Mayor Walter Momper declared, "The heart of Berlin will soon beat again." □

Curtain Still Down

ANTHONY DANIELS

Joseph Borzotta

BUCHAREST—"For your lifelong commitment to national and social liberation from the forces of fascist and lawless regimes, a commitment which earned for you the honor of having been incarcerated for your political beliefs, thus joining that distinguished company of true leaders of men who, even while political prisoners, affirmed the integrity of the mind through the resoluteness of their will and the strength of their ideas . . ." At this point, a policeman approached to prevent me from copying down any more of the citation conferring the University of the Philippines' honorary doctorate of laws on the Supreme Guide of Rumania's Golden Age and Epoch of Light, President of the Republic and Secretary General of the Party Nicolae Ceausescu. The citation was displayed in the portion of Bucharest's Historical Museum devoted to presents and awards given to the *conducator* since his accession to power in 1965: room after room of kitsch trinkets from Mali, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Peru, orders and decorations from Zambia, Argentina, Malta, Thailand, Britain, and the United States, degrees *honoris causa* from every continent, each a "living testimony" to the deep esteem and affection in which the great Rumanian dictator is held everywhere. There is even displayed his honorary citizenship of Disney World, though it is not easy to see it because the light of the Epoch of Light is insufficient to illuminate Mickey Mouse's words of tribute.

And then, of course, there are the tributes from his own people: huge porcelain vases with full-length portraits of him, portraits woven into carpets and tapestries complete with overarching rainbows and doves with olive branches, portraits in oils showing him wearing his worker's cap among fields of waving corn or down coalmines, everywhere with admiring workers who are hanging on his every word.

Next door was a special exhibition of Rumanian achievements, presided over by a huge portrait of the Balkan *Duce* and his wife, great scientist and mother-in-law to the entire nation. Here were exhibited to the gaze of schoolchildren all the great inventions of the Rumanian Communist Party, such as ketchup, lightbulbs, canned soup, personal computers, bottled cherries, electrocardiographs. The schoolchildren were shepherded around by teachers who knew that the whole exhibition was a monstrous lie, who knew that the *real* achievements of People's Rumania were of a different order altogether . . .

Even Ceausescu, as he speeds down the permanently cordoned-off Calea Victoriei from the Party headquarters to his palatial residence, must have noticed the endless queues for meat, for butter, for eggs (the meat ration is half a kilo per person per month, the ration of cooking oil half a liter). Since the *Securitate*, the secret police, has hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of informers, it is unlikely he does not know that old people are routinely denied medical treatment, that there are two patients per bed in many hospitals, that there are few drugs or dressings, that births are not registered for six months to keep the infant-mortality figures low, that people have to cook at night because there is no gas during the day, that the old Rumanian cuisine, once famous, has been extinguished in favor of the "Scientific Diet," that coffee and Kent cigarettes are the real currency of the country, that peasants must trek into town to find food, that there is a black market in books (not his, however), that the office door of the chief rabbi has a notice refusing converts because they are merely would-be emigrants to Israel, that the applause that greets him everywhere lasts so long because people are afraid to be the first to stop clapping, that some risk death and the victimization of their families to escape his Golden Age—I gave a lift to a worker on his way to swim the Danube who by the evening would be either free or dead. "Let them hate me," said Caligula, "so long as they fear me."

And fear Ceausescu they do. There is a strange reluctance to mention him by name, even amongst those people otherwise forthright in their denunciations. Rumanians seem to be in the grip of a psychosis, one of whose symptoms is avoidance behavior. And their fear, it must be said, is not the raw emotion of men facing overwhelming physical danger: it has an ethereal, transcendent quality, truly Kafkaesque.

Mr. Daniels is a freelance writer whose books include Zanzibar to Timbuktu *and* Coups and Cocaine.

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RIGHT DATA

The Economic Wall

INTERNATIONAL economic comparisons are always tricky, especially when planned economies are compared with capitalist ones. Take these figures, from the CIA's *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1989*:

TWO SYSTEMS COMPARED

	West Germany	East Germany
GNP, 1988 (Billions U.S.)	$870.0	$207.2
GNP per capita	$14,260	$12,480
Population (millions)	61.0	16.6
Pop. change, 1960-87 (millions)	+5.6	-0.5
Autos per 1,000 persons	446	209
Auto production, 1987	4,430,000	217,000
Life expectancy (years)	76	73
INTERNATIONAL TRADE DATA *(1988, Billions U.S.)*		
Exports	$323.4	$30.7
Imports	250.6	31.0
Trade balance	72.8	(0.3)

The per-capita GNP figure, for example, shows only a 14.3 per cent advantage for West Germany. The actual gap in living standards is many times larger, since East German central planners channel the bulk of GNP into heavy industry, chemicals, and other exports, while giving short shrift to consumer products.

The East German economy is now believed to be in far worse shape than portrayed above. The recently departed finance minister, for example, disclosed a hitherto unacknowledged budget deficit of about $70 billion—roughly one-third of GNP. Industrial productivity, always a problem, has reportedly sunk by almost 50 per cent over the past nine years. Despite frequent attempts to "rationalize" production, East German factories still use two and a half times as much coal and twice as much steel per unit of output as their West German counterparts.

Inflation, theoretically impossible in a centrally planned economy, is now acknowledged to be well into double digits, although the exact figure is unknown. Debt owed to Western creditors totals $20 billion, putting East Germany in about the same position as Poland and Hungary on a per-capita basis.

Still, East Germany is far and away the economic class act of Eastern Europe. Its per-capita income in 1988 was estimated by the CIA to be 2.3 times that of Rumania, 1.7 times that of Poland, and 1.4 times that of Hungary. East German exports exceed those of Poland, a country nearly three times as populous. It is the only Eastern Bloc nation to export significant amounts to the West.

That this (relative) success occurred without any real attempt at *perestroika* is a tribute to the efficiency of the East German worker. Indeed, despite losing perhaps 100,000 skilled workers over the past few months, the East German labor force remains a big potential draw for Western businesses seeking investment opportunities. There are, according to the CIA, 8.9 million workers in the population. By comparison, West Germany's labor force is put at 28.1 million, or 46 per cent of the population.

Unify East and West Germany and you would have a nation with 78 million people, more than 660,000 of them under arms, and a GNP (assuming that the East Germans are brought up to West German levels) of $1.2 trillion, about two-thirds that of Japan. —ED RUBENSTEIN

Of course, there *are* tangible reasons for fear. Whenever I went to a Rumanian's apartment, the telephone was taken out of the room in which we spoke, it being assumed not only that telephone lines were routinely tapped, but that the apparatus itself was installed with microphones to monitor conversations at home. *Securitate* spies and informers—bone-faced men in suits whose linings seem filled with pebbles—stand at intersections and at entrances to buildings, watching for counter-revolution. People who voice even the faintest dissension are demoted, blackmailed, harassed, deprived of work, denied the tiny privileges essential to survival in a situation of permanent shortages, in a system where the impersonal cash nexus, so hated by Marx, has been replaced by political status and personal connection. Yet a powerful impression remains that the fear one encounters here is out of proportion to the "real" danger, that physical brutality alone cannot account for it.

What does explain it, then? I concluded that the cause lies deep in Marxist–Leninist ideology, which distorts and deforms human life wherever it is imposed, thanks to its unprecedented assault on human language and thought itself. For by denying the validity of Aristotelian logic, the rulers cause words to lose all fixity of meaning; any premise can support any conclusion, and all judgments are rendered temporary and dependent on the latest political climate. *Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world . . .*

It is not just that today's dogma is tomorrow's heresy, and vice versa. It is necessary in Rumania to forget that any dogma other than the present one was ever held, while at the same time maintaining the eternal infallibility of the dogmatists. As the East German song used to say, "The Party, the Party, is always right." I met a man who had spent five years in jail under the harshest possible conditions for having asserted something that a couple of years later became official truth. He was not pardoned, let alone compensated; for he was guilty not only of *lèse-majesté* but of error, having failed to comprehend that the criterion of truth is political, not correspondence to an external reality. In other words, he had not thought *dialectically*.

Dialectics teaches also that nothing is what it seems, that everything has to be decoded and its real meaning uncovered by a series of mental contortions. This is apparent in everyday life. Take Bucharest's Boulevard of the Triumph of Socialism (the vast

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avenue that Ceausescu has had constructed in the center of the city in his determination to transform the Paris of the Balkans into the Pyongyang of the Balkans) which necessitated the razing of nine thousand homes and 16 ancient churches, and which ends in front of an MGM-Babylonian palace of unimaginable vulgarity. Down the center of the boulevard run gardens with scores of fountains, which are switched on only when the *Duce* goes by. The buildings along the boulevard remain empty three years after their completion, except for the stores at street level, with their marble floors, polished brass railings, and elegantly turned-out sales assistants, whose stock of luxury goods, however, is NOT FOR SALE. Thus a store is not a store, proving in practice that Aristotle's law of contradiction does not hold in Rumania. But if a store is not a store, what is it? Scenery for the dictator? A further means of humiliating the common man, who a hundred yards away is in a line four hundred yards long to receive exiguous rations of ersatz sausage? Well, yes and no: under dialectical materialism, the answer is always yes and no.

There are secret meanings everywhere. I was surprised to discover in the northern Rumanian town of Sighetu Marmatiei a monument commemorating the Jews who, in 1944, were rounded up for forced labor and extermination. In general, the subject of the destruction of Rumanian Jewry —from 1.6 million before the war to thirty thousand now—is taboo. One and a half million people have disappeared down a black hole of memory. In the Moldavian city of Iasi, for example, one searches in vain for an acknowledgment that before the war a third of the city's population was Jewish, and that thousands died in pogroms there. Why the difference between Sighetu and Iasi? Because in Sighetu it was the Hungarians who were responsible, while in Iasi it was the Rumanians. The monument to the Jews, therefore, is not a monument to the Jews: it is anti-Hungarian propaganda.

In a situation where meanings constantly shift, where nothing is what it seems, where every statement has to be sifted to reveal its significance, where language itself expresses not information but political power, it is not surprising that everyone is afraid. Life in Rumania is lived in quicksand.

Many Rumanian intellectuals to whom I spoke, deeply attached to values that they felt were dying, were pessimistic about the future. They knew about the events in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Hungary, but Rumania was different, they said; it had no political tradition and it could be Albanianized without difficulty. Nearly half a century of disconnection between belief and action, thought and speech, had rendered the Rumanian people pusillanimous, hypocritical, cringing, without convictions . . . It would take generations for them to recover their humanity.

It is not easy to disagree with people from whom devotion to truth demands so much sacrifice. Yet I felt that state power in Rumania, seemingly so solid, was rather like the *Scinteia* building in Bucharest. This vast edifice, in Stalinist wedding-cake baroque, is the chief lie-manufactory of the Rumanian republic, from whose entrails emanates the world's dullest and most mendacious newspaper, *Scinteia* (The Spark, named after Lenin's *Iskra*). The front of the building is overwhelmingly solid in its effect, with a pharaonic statue of Lenin before it. But if you go to the rear of the building, you discover that after forty years it is still a building site, with wasteland churned into mud, littered with unused concrete blocks, the stone facing of the walls full of cracks, crumbling away to reveal the shoddiness beneath. In traveling 1,500 miles through Rumania, I did not speak to a single person who did not despise the little Führer of Bucharest and his preposterous thousand-year Reich. If the center cannot hold, how long can the periphery stand up?

For the moment, however, Ceausescu performs an invaluable social service. At a time of great but precarious change for the better in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, while people with fatuously short memories grow sentimental, the Balkan Nero reminds us of the entire, unloved *genre*. I recommend that everyone visit Rumania before it is too late: once experienced, never forgotten. But take sandwiches. □

Poland's Good Old Days (Now)

RADEK SIKORSKI

Lisa Haney

WARSAW—It was assumed until recently, with the wishful exaggeration understandable under the circumstances, that, at least in Eastern Europe, Communism's last gasp would be greeted with wild enthusiasm, dancing in the streets, and the shatter of vodka glasses on the floor. The reality has already sobered everybody up. Getting rid of Communism is proving not like casting off chains and suddenly walking free again but rather like dropping some weight out of a heavy rucksack on a long slog toward elusive highlands. The Poles and Hungarians are finding that, even with Western help, it will be many years yet before their inefficient economies, mortgaged to the hilt, might deliver the standard of living every unemployed person in America takes for granted. Moreover, the people who fought most strenuously and have the greatest reason to rejoice in Communism's demise—the Eastern European intelligentsia—may eventually find life without it pretty boring.

For the moment, this seems a preposterous suggestion. In Poland and Hungary at least, the intelligentsia's decades of dissidence have at last been vindicated, its long resistance at last rewarded—with the promise of free elections in Hungary, and

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with the burdens of power in Poland. The feeling, beloved by intellectuals, that here, in their midst, *history* is present is reaching its zenith. Certainly, as the first non-Communist prime minister in Eastern Europe for forty years, Tadeusz Mazowiecki is assured of a place in books of world, not just regional, history.

BUT WHAT of the future? Suppose that Mazowiecki's most optimistic hopes for Poland come true: Communist institutions are reformed, rule of law is entrenched, and, above all, a market economy is restored. Will that result in the kind of Poland the intelligentsia had dreamt of? The talk among Poland's twenty- and thirty-year-olds is that now, "now that we have won," let us stop wagging our tongues and let us prove that our opposition to Communism was more than mere contrariety: let us start companies and buy up state businesses and make them prosper. "And good luck to them," one is tempted to exclaim. In a country where the old rich were killed or expropriated, one can only aspire to become a member of the new rich; thus Mazowiecki can argue for a capitalist revolution without being accused of being the Establishment's poodle. Since the great majority of would-be entrepreneurs are starting from nothing, Poland might see a purer, juster form of the revolution. If in ten years' time a bourgeoisie has emerged this might be regarded as an excellent example of the market sprouting an elite of the best and brightest.

But will the intellectuals be pleased if and when this new revolution succeeds? Will they like their own child? I doubt it.

For the first time in its history, Poland is a mono-ethnic country. The vast multinational republic which, in addition to the Poles, contained Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Germans, and the biggest concentration of Jews in Europe still had substantial minorities after its resurrection inside diminished borders in 1918. Moreover, an incredible proportion of its best minds and pens came from these minorities or from people of mixed origin. Rather than demonstrating that Poles are comparatively dim, I like to think this shows that uncommon men are more likely to come from uncommon backgrounds. Interbreeding is good for the intellectual climate as well as the gene pool.

Today, there is little intermarriage in Poland, give or take the odd foreign journalist or academic wedding a Polish wife. There is not even the limited cultural tension one finds between England on the one hand and Scotland and Wales on the other, or Britain as a whole and the Continent. In Poland, Stalin created a state which is a nationalist's dream. Minorities are less than 1 per cent of the population—the Jews having been exterminated and the Germans expelled, with Poles from the lost eastern marches taking over their cities and farms. The displacement of two world wars and years of purges and social engineering have eradicated most regional differences too.

The Polish intelligentsia has been nurtured in the tradition of its own predestination to leadership, and for as long as Communism maintained its iron clamp there was a cause into which those leadership urges could be channeled. But if Poland is to recover, then government by journalists, historians and literary critics must be a transitory phenomenon. Sooner or later they will have to pass on the actual management to professionals: bureaucrats and politicians. Even if things go as well as they can, for the next decade or so Poland will be in deep economic crisis: poverty, industrial strife, the greed of the new bourgeoisie—these should provide sufficient themes for half a generation of writers, journalists and filmmakers. And then? When there are no minorities to brush against—as in the old Polish republic or in America today—and when the fundamental political question is settled, where is the tension going to come from? What will the successors to Milosz, Wajda, or Kolakowski grapple with? How long can one stay a creative artist when all there is to do is curse the past and praise the achievements of steady government? This is not to say that politics is the only stimulus to creativity, but merely to point out that, say, Iceland and Switzerland are hardly hubbubs of creative frenzy.

We ought to watch how this Stalinist guinea pig develops because Poland, though an example of man-made descent into backwardness in most respects, may prove a portent of things to come: with regional differences fewer and fewer, a post-1992 Europe might become as homogeneous as Poland, and as sterile.

When times were hard—that is, for as long as most people can remember—Poles used to cheer themselves up: Communism may be nasty and brutish, but how interesting! One could mouth on endlessly, splitting ideological and political hairs till many a dawn. For, as long as Communism presented a worldwide challenge, it was possible to see, in the universal scramble for scarce flats, cars, or condoms, in the very awfulness of one's daily life, the manifestation of vast historical forces at work. It was painful to be caught on the wrong side, but at least one had the satisfaction of participating in one of our century's prime battles. Painful, but how spectacular! It's amazing what people will put up with as long as they feel they are taking part in something greater than themselves. Where culture (in the German sense) is the society's last line of defense, intellectuals are important and can easily persuade themselves that it is their defiant ideals and gestures, rather than hard military and economic realities, that determine the course of events. Besides, mild repression is good for literary style. Such compensations for poverty will disappear if and when Poland is no longer a vital link in the Warsaw Pact but a backwater on Europe's periphery.

IN A DECADE or so, when a free-market society has put down its roots—with all the attendant greed, pettiness of political debate, and bourgeois values intellectuals so love to hate—Communism's twilight years may yet be remembered with nostalgia. "What is the difference between Poland and East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the rest?" an old Polish joke used to run. "Very little—we are all in the same socialist camp, but our barrack is jollier than most." God willing, that may not be true much longer. Most people will gain when Poland is less jolly and less interesting and there is more sausage and toilet paper in the shops instead. If it becomes a normal country, the intellectuals' loss of standing and self-esteem will be a small price to pay. It's better to be a backwater of the West than a linchpin of the East. □

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WHERE WE STAND

WM. F. BUCKLEY JR.

THE COVER of this magazine celebrates perhaps the most famous woman in the world, and in a pose appropriate to the advent of the Christmas season. The sheer, numbing saintliness of Mother Teresa has captured the attention of men and women as cosmopolitan as the jurors who give out the Nobel Prize for Peace. That to such a person abortion should be so offensive takes us to the argument at hand, the solemnity of which is reinforced by its association with her, "the servant of the servants of the poor."

The two essays that follow—the first by our Washington correspondent, William McGurn, the second by our long-time academic associate Ernest van den Haag—do not collide on moral ground. That is so because Mr. McGurn believes that the majority of American voters are, to reduce the question to its fundamental formulation, opposed to "abortion on demand." Mr. van den Haag disagrees on that plebiscitary question. Not entirely, but he believes that the majority of the American people are in favor of abortion on demand during the first trimester of pregnancy.

There are important things that go unsaid, in our judgment, by both of our essayists. Mr. McGurn doesn't tell you what is the correct road for the Republican Party should it eventually transpire that the majority of the American people in fact do believe in abortion on demand: i.e., pretty much the kind of thing approved by *Roe* v. *Wade* in practice. And, interestingly enough, Mr. van den Haag fails to clarify the question when raised at a different moment, i.e., three months after conception: What does he think should be the position of the Republican Party if it were established that the majority of the American people were to favor (or were to come to favor) abortion right up until the ninth month?

Mr. McGurn feels that the GOP would be invigorated by taking a principled stand on the question, but does not tell us what he would favor if, instead of invigoration, what ensued were atrophy. Mr. van den Haag, meanwhile, stresses that the secularization of our culture makes it progressively more difficult to urge sanctions that are primarily religious in provenance upon those who do not accept religious insights and commandments; or who, even if they do, wish to be left free to traduce them, even as the Christian is free to decline to give food to the hungry. If the American community were, twenty years from now, to endorse infanticide, I am not sure what Mr. van den Haag would do about this, save to remind us that in order to indulge such a thing, we would need to amend the Constitution.

What we are left with, then, is the basic question: Is it possible to prescind a deeply felt moral commitment from an institutional political vehicle, and remain loyal to that political vehicle? Inevitably, glandular forces come into play. It is difficult to imagine countenancing a Republican Party that left it to individual candidates to side with or against infanticide. It is useful to adduce infanticide-as-population-control as the spook of the future because it seems entirely unlikely that a movement to authorize it will germinate in the lifetime even of young Americans. But it is not so with euthanasia, which is an issue right now. A decision by the Supreme Court declaring that an individual citizen has the right to opt for the end of his life—and, in circumstances where he cannot administer his own termination, has the right to summon professional help—would be astonishing. But, actually, no more so than *Roe* v. *Wade*. Probably less so, in fact; since it is widely suspected that euthanasia goes on all the time, probably in most states of the Union. Some moral comfort is to be taken, however, from our knowledge that it is illegal; even as many who would vote against legalizing abortion are prepared to engage in it when especially convenient, or especially urgent. Hundreds of thousands of abortions were performed in America before 1973.

It remains to stress that the issue is open whether the conservative community can prevail in its pro-life campaign. Nothing, as Mr. McGurn persuasively argues, has been transcribed on the matter of the will of the American people. And easy capitulations are at best unsatisfactory; at worst, contemptible. The argument that it is all right to be pro-choice in your political actions as long as you are yourself pro-life is a license for moral inactivity. The positions of such as Mario Cuomo, Patrick Moynihan, and Edward Kennedy remind us that the temptation to be guided by political considerations not only shapes our public declarations, but tends to calcify our consciences. There are those who would be consoled by seeing an

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occasional tear genuinely shed by Cuomo–Moynihan–Kennedy when they reflect on the 1.6 million babies that are not allowed to be born, and who would take some satisfaction in hearing some high oratory from them on the putative right to live.

So: Let us acknowledge that comity, except in outrageous extremes (a call for genocide, say), is necessary to the commonweal. But acknowledge, also, that the fight for life for the unborn is as pure as the lady who graces our cover. □

ABORTION: THE POLITICS

WHAT THE PEOPLE REALLY SAY

WILLIAM McGURN

ON A CRISP November afternoon on Capitol Hill, the chief deputy whip for the Republicans, Bob Walker of Pennsylvania, was out on the floor making the rounds. The subject was an appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services, and no one was expecting any fuss; a Bush veto had already forced out controversial language about using Medicaid to fund abortion in cases of rape and incest. There were to be no amendments offered and, Walker assumed, no speeches.

He assumed wrong. No sooner had the bill been read than a number of Democrats stood up and delivered themselves of rousing sermons on the need for these abortions. It was all there: appeals to end the "tyranny over the American woman"; laments over "abandoning victim[s] of incest"; references to the hardheartedness of "the anti-choice crowd." Henry Hyde (R., Ill.) promptly counterattacked, though he had no prepared remarks.

Bob Walker hadn't prepared anything either, but when Democrats Les AuCoin (Ore.), Barbara Boxer (Calif.), and Charles Schumer (N.Y.) started dropping their little bombs, he motioned to speak. Going to the heart of the matter, the gentleman from Pennsylvania suggested that the "real agenda" of all those who had waxed so eloquent was not help for victims of rape and incest but support for abortion on demand. AuCoin tried to get the discussion back to rape and incest—stepping smartly into Walker's cross-hook. "Let me ask the gentleman directly," said Walker. "Does the gentleman support abortion on demand?" AuCoin feebly cited choice, and Walker pressed on. "Does the gentleman support abortion in the first trimester?" On the ropes, AuCoin retreated to *Roe* v. *Wade*. Then time ran out.

It was a knockout.

ONLY A FEW months back this short exchange might not have meant too much. After all, it was impromptu, lasting barely two or three minutes. But coming as it did a week after elections that saw hitherto pro-life Republicans taking the I'm-personally-opposed-but line, it demonstrated that a clear and aggressive pro-life attack effectively leaves the opposition speechless. To put it in political terms, pro-life (properly understood) is a winning ticket.

This is a critical point now that the Supreme Court has begun to throw the issue back to the states and is on the verge of reversing *Roe* v. *Wade* itself, the juridically imperialistic 1973 decision that overturned the laws of fifty states to usher in abortion on demand. The Court's decision in *Webster* v. *Reproductive Health Services* this July 3 has altered the political landscape by opening the way for states to restrict abortion and so save babies' lives. In so doing, the Court forced opponents of abortion to shift their focus from what they would ideally like, to what they can do right now to move toward their goal. The overriding question for pro-lifers is no longer philosophical. It's tactical.

That itself is no small victory, but you wouldn't know it from the panic rippling through the Republican Party. Now, there are certainly pro-life Democrats, and some of them—such as John LaFalce, author of a letter protesting his party's support for (taxpayer-funded) abortion on demand—have taken courageous stands. But for historical reasons having to do with the last three presidential campaigns, this question falls mainly on the Republican Party, whose platform stoutly declares for the sanctity of unborn life.

"If the Republican Party has a future it has to be as the party of life," says Henry Hewes, a Republican who ran for mayor of New York on the Right to Life ticket and completely upstaged his two opponents in the television debates. "It is an organizing tool around which Republicans can build a majority."

For a long time many Republicans were content to mouth hard-line pro-life positions because the courts were making law, not the legislature. But today a candidate's position might actually affect the number of abortions in his state, which explains why it became such a big issue this November. In the elections for mayor of New York and governor of both Virginia and New Jersey, the Republicans might have won without the abortion issue. All were attacked by the pro-choicers, yet not a single one took a firm (let alone a coherent) pro-life stand.

Remarkably these three questionable races have fed the delusions of fringe groups like the National Organization for Women and the National Abortion Rights Action League, as well as pro-choice Republicans such as Senator Bob Packwood (Ore.). The notion that pro-life is an unpopular position has even seeped in to unexpected areas such as the Conservative Opportunity Society. This is the

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group of Young Turk House members who are supposed to be in the vanguard of a Gingrich-style reform of the GOP. And yet, at a recent COS breakfast meeting, Cass Ballenger (N.C.) crowed about how much favorable mail he was getting now that he'd cut his conscience to the pro-choice side. As for the Democrats, some of those who have the presidential glint in their eyes are talking as if abortion were the Great Cause that will finally get them back into the White House.

"I *hope* the Democrats read this as the issue they can ride to national power," says Walker. "I hope they think that, because it would be a tremendous mistake on their part. Because ultimately we can trump them with the American public by providing the kind of debate that shows the other side to be exactly what they are—people who favor the extreme position of abortion on demand."

True enough, only a small percentage of Americans want abortion outlawed in all circumstances. But an even tinier fraction accept the extreme abortion-on-demand position, the *government-subsidized* abortion-on-demand position, which is the position of the Democratic Party. More to the point, pro-choice Republicans are almost by definition people for whom abortion is a secondary issue, not likely to cross over on that issue alone, whereas pro-life Democrats tend to be ethnic Americans for whom abortion is often a top concern. The point is that the majority of Americans oppose the majority of abortions, and the issue of rape and incest (which account for only about 1 per cent of all abortions, according to figures from the pro-choice Alan Guttmacher Institute) presents an opening to recast the debate.

THE PARTY OF LINCOLN
LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH LET US TO THE END DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT!
A. LINCOLN 1860
FREE THE SLAVES
THE PARTY OF MUSH
WHAT IS OUR POSITION ON ABORTION? WELL, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST POPULARITY POLL, WE...
WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS 1989
FREE THE ABORTION PILL!
ASAY ©

"Ronald Reagan would have seen these questions [rape and incest] as an opportunity to state his own views," says Gary Bauer, former domestic-policy advisor to President Reagan and now president of the Family Research Council. "He would say, 'Look, we're talking about the life of an unborn child here and how can you talk about that?' Reagan would have turned it to abortion on demand."

For all their faults, the polls are pretty clear about what the American public thinks about this. In March a *Boston Globe*/WBZ survey found an overwhelming majority of Americans opposed to allowing abortions for the following reasons: the mother is a minor, the child is not the desired sex, the mother is under emotional strain, the father is not willing to help, or one parent wants to have the baby and the other doesn't. It also went on to note that "poorer people and blacks are more anti-abortion than the rest of the population." No surprise, that, since considerable support for abortion is directed at reducing America's minority population.

This visceral anti-abortion feeling has already translated into a number of serious legislative efforts around the country, and even a cursory glance at their progress ought to show that the Molly Yards and the Pat Schroeders don't stand much of a chance in a fair fight. The following represent the post-*Webster* efforts to date:

—In Louisiana, two days after the *Webster* decision, a resolution to enforce the state's anti-abortion statutes passed by 81 to 13 in the House and 26 to 0 in the Senate. That decision also spurred the district attorney of New Orleans to file a case whose object is to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade*.

—In Michigan this December, the House will take up a bill requiring parental consent for minors seeking abortions, which measure has already passed the Senate by a 29 to 8 majority.

—In Wisconsin, similar efforts to get a parental-consent bill through have started. Pro-lifers already forced one bill through the committee, but the chairman rewrote it, watering it down. The compromise pleased no one, however, and a tougher version will emerge next session.

—In Illinois, the House overrode a veto by pro-choice Governor James Thompson (a Republican) of a bill that would ban the use of aborted fetuses in research.

—In Florida, where the press and pro-choicers declared victory, pro-lifers actually had a majority in the Senate. They lost only because they didn't have the required two-thirds margin to force the bill in question out of committee.

—And in Pennsylvania, the governor signed into law a measure that would restrict abortions after six months, the toughest restrictions in post-*Roe* America. The measure passed by 33 to 17 in the Senate and an overwhelming 143 to 58 in the House.

Obviously more is coming. Though the pro-lifers have not always got what they wanted, they have proved that most people are on their side on most specific issues. "In every state where there's been an up-or-down vote on the issue, we've won," says Jack Fowler, Washington bureau chief for the Ad Hoc Committee in Defense of Life.

SO HOW COME Republicans are running for the tall grass? Good question, and the answer goes a long way toward explaining why the Republicans have remained a minority for almost four decades. Obviously most of the waffling stems from the fate of Rudolph Giuliani, James Courter, and Marshall Coleman on election day. Other Republicans have come to the conclusion that without the abortion albatross these candidates might have won. Their nervousness was heightened by the huge pro-abortion rally in Washington right after these elections, where the Left gloated about its victories and vowed to go on the warpath against anyone who didn't line up for a woman's unrestricted right to an abortion.

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That's a highly optimistic interpretation of the election results. An unbiased observer could hardly read these elections as defeats for pro-life candidates, since not one of the losers had taken a clear pro-life line. Giuliani started out a year ago courting the pro-lifers and ended up on election day with the same abortion-on-demand position as opponent David Dinkins. Across the river, the only clear impression James Courter left New Jersey voters was that he had no clear convictions, or at least no clear convictions he wouldn't sell out. And in Virginia, Marshall Coleman lost simply because for more than a month he refused to respond to pro-choice ads by Doug Wilder; when he *did* finally respond he narrowed the gap considerably, turning a race that had been deemed a Wilder rout into a squeaker.

"The advice I'm giving Republican candidates is to state your position on the issue and don't move away from it," says Republican National Committee Chairman Lee Atwater. "You have to define your position before your opponents do. In the last election Republicans suffered because Democrats used paid advertisements to define the Republicans as extremists."

Most Americans would look askance at a candidate who opposed giving American women the same extensive information about abortion that they can get on every other operation.

Had the Republicans responded, the impression, and the outcome, might have been different. Most Americans would be suspicious of a politician who favored allowing their 13-year-old daughters to have abortions without the parents' consent when these same girls can't get their ears pierced without parental permission. Most Americans would look askance at a candidate who opposed giving American women the same extensive information about abortion that they can get on every other operation. Most Americans would be horrified by a candidate who believed it was okay for someone to have an abortion if she was hoping for a boy and proved to be carrying a girl. Most Americans would not give their vote to someone who argued for abortion into the late stages of pregnancy. Above all, most Americans would find something extreme in a party that was shown to oppose all these restrictions on abortion. The problem is not the Republican Party platform. The problem is Republicans.

The Republican orchestra is a collection of uncertain trumpets, unable to lead anywhere. President Bush, for example, holds a press conference in which he says abortion is ninth or 14th on the list of Americans' priorities, suggesting it's not very important. RNC Chairman Atwater echoes Republican embarrassment on the issue with his constant emphasis that the party is broad enough to include pro-choice members. The point is not whether that's true. Of course it is, just as the New York Yankees are always going to have second-string shortstops on their team. But you don't see owner George Steinbrenner telling New Yorkers that the Yankees are broad enough to include mediocre players. It might please a small few, but it makes your season-ticket-holders very nervous.

Nowhere was this Republican discomfort more pronounced than at the just-ended governors' conference in Hilton Head, South Carolina. As was to be expected, pro-choice Republicans used the confab to howl about the party platform to frightened delegates; the *Washington Post*, ever a beacon of the *Zeitgeist*, pushed this line in a story that was headlined "GOP Governors Urge Party to Ease Anti-Abortion Stance" but turned out to be based solely on the remarks of two longtime pro-choice and hardly mainstream Republicans, Jim Thompson of Illinois and Tom Kean of New Jersey. Pollster Linda DiVall invoked the mysterious "power of the phrase 'a woman's right to choose,'" and Lee Atwater stood up to speak (again) about the "big tent." Vice President Quayle, long a pro-life stalwart, did not mention abortion in his address, a tactical mistake that aides say does not mean he is walking away from the issue.

The only man to sense a vacuum and fill it was drug czar William Bennett. The day after the elections, he hinted at the Bennett difference when he said that abortion as birth control was simply not acceptable and that Republicans had to stop "futzing around" on something as fundamental as life. He did the same at Hilton Head. While everyone else was shuffling around or looking for the back exit, Bennett urged Republicans to face the issue head on. "Let's be strong," he told the audience. "Let's be principled." He drew the loudest applause.

The other Republican in recent times with that kind of instinct to get back up on firm ground was Ronald Reagan. Maybe it's no coincidence that both men are former Democrats.

WHETHER THEY like it or not, Republicans cannot run away from abortion. The *Webster* decision made it a real political issue in American life, and three more decisions on the subject will come down next summer, in the thick of the 1990 campaigns. Because abortion is such a profoundly moral dilemma, those who are seen to be trimming their sails will do worst.

George Bush needs to be careful too. Thus far he has shown more backbone than Reagan on substance—certainly more than anyone ever expected—vetoing these pro-choice bills. His problem is that he's all action and no talk, which, in view of his pro-choice past, can make him appear to the public as simply an opportunist (George Will's suggestion). Nor is it compromise itself that hurts him. Reagan accepted compromise all the time, but he never *campaigned* on compromise. In a democracy a moral imperative of politics is to address fundamental issues on terms clear and strong enough for people to respect, even when they disagree.

"It's okay to follow public opinion," says William Bennett, "but it's not all right to be led by it. Political leadership is telling people what you think they ought to hear, and that itself is one of the influences on how the

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public thinks on any issue. In this specific case, we have to remember that, my God, we're talking about 1.6 million abortions a year. And no one can tell me that someone who stands up and appeals to the conscience of the American people on this issue is going to be abandoned." It's reassuring to know that Bennett would be there even if they did abandon him, more reassuring to know they won't. □

ABORTION: THE MORALITY

IS THERE A MIDDLE GROUND?

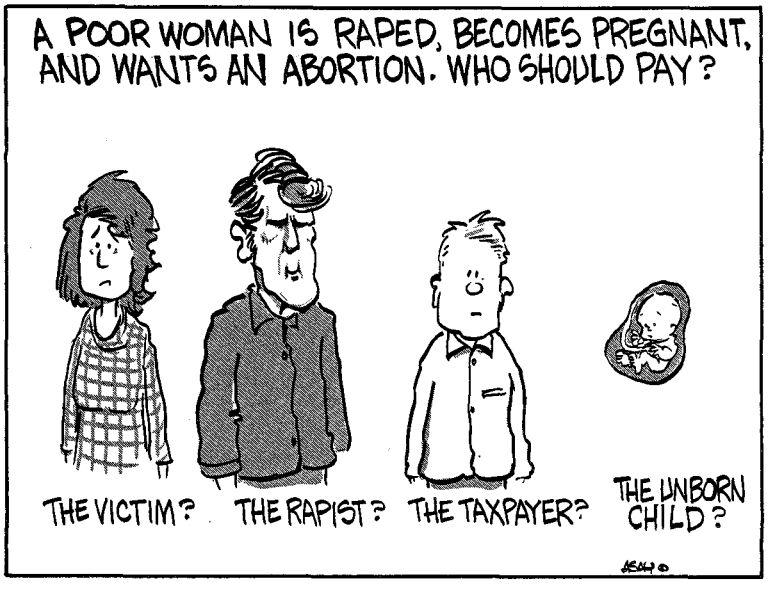
ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

IN PAGAN ANTIQUITY it was taken for granted that, except for slaves, people own themselves. Hence everybody was free to dispose of himself as he wanted. Suicide was neither illegal nor thought immoral. It was taken for granted as well that free persons owned whatever they produced and could dispose of it as they wished. Infants were the property of the parents who produced them (more specifically of the *paterfamilias*, since: *familia id est patrimonium*) until they became independent adults who owned themselves. Roman law consequently did not regard infanticide by parents as a crime. That norm prevailed throughout the pagan world. (Probably also in the early stages of Jewish development: the proposed sacrifice by Abraham of his son Isaac marked the beginning of the end of human sacrifice and probably of parental infanticide as well.) Infants were the property of their parents, to dispose of as they thought fit. *Eo ipso* this was the case also for fetuses, although the technology for aborting them was not well developed.

Christianity changed all this. According to Christian belief persons possess but do not own themselves. Rather, people belong to their creator, who alone is entitled to dispose of his creatures. Suicide became a sin—and, until recently, a crime. (Of course, only the unsuccessful attempt was punishable in this world.) Infants no longer are regarded as the product of their parents and owned by them. They are God's creatures. He creates them through the instrumentality of parental intercourse. Parents have a fiduciary duty. It gradually became a crime for them to kill their infants, *post partum* and, ultimately, *in utero* as well. For a long time, however, it was not a crime to abort the embryo before "quickening" and "ensoulment."

Followers of the Judaeo-Christian tradition still are most numerous and passionate among those who believe abortion to be wrong. On the other hand, most of those who no longer adhere to Judaeo-Christian beliefs do not find abortion to be wrong in principle. They believe that the decision on whether or not to carry the fetus to term belongs entirely to the mother. She has produced the fetus (with indispensable, but minor, male assistance) and therefore owns it and can dispose of it as she can of her own body.

Pro-abortionists usually shrink from infanticide. They argue that the infant is unquestionably alive, unquestionably human, and viable outside the mother, whereas the fetus may not be. The real reason is less intellectually plausible but psychologically more compelling: feticide occurs inside the maternal womb. It kills an entity that no one has seen alive, that is known to exist, but is not directly observed. Infanticide kills a human being that is independently alive. The killing occurs in full view, outside the maternal womb. Infanticide thus mobilizes compassion and solidarity—even horror—far more directly than feticide.


A POOR WOMAN IS RAPED, BECOMES PREGNANT, AND WANTS AN ABORTION. WHO SHOULD PAY?
THE VICTIM?
THE RAPIST?
THE TAXPAYER?
THE UNBORN CHILD?

Although within the Judaeo-Christian tradition there are some ways to condone abortion, and on the secular side there are some arguments to oppose it (as well as suicide and infanticide), the theoretical chasm between secularists, who believe that we belong to ourselves, and traditionalists, who believe that we are God's creatures, is unbridgeable. If parents do not own themselves or the fetus, they have no right to dispose of it except within the range prescribed by their creator. If parents own themselves and the fetus is their product, their right to dispose of it can be challenged only when abused in specific ways.

Let me digress to note here that John Locke, despite his strong emphasis on property rights, particularly in one's own product, clung to religious tradition. He did not feel that we own ourselves. Locke wrote: Though man "have an uncontroleable Liberty, to dispose of his Person or

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Possessions, yet he has not Liberty to destroy himself, or so much as any Creature in his Possession . . . For Men being all the Workmanship . . . of one Sovereign Master . . . they are His Property." *A fortiori* the killing of innocent human offspring cannot be rightful at any stage, since it belongs to God.

The increasing secularization of Western societies since Locke points toward restoration of the pre-Christian concepts of self-ownership. However, these concepts are modified by contemporary individualism (also largely a Christian heritage, but quite divorced now from religion), which weakens the authority of the *paterfamilias*, indeed, of the family itself. Individualism, secularization, and, not least, the current obsession with equality have endowed infants and children with new rights; but not embryos or even fetuses, whose unborn rights, if any, seem superseded by the individual rights of their mothers.

ANTI-ABORTIONISTS believe that "life begins at conception." This makes sense (indeed, what is aborted if not life?), although it amounts to a somewhat circular definition. Conception is the fertilization of the ovum, which then, attached to the uterine wall, develops into an embryo, according to encoded genes which control its individuality and the stages of its growth. As it develops, the embryo acquires human characteristics, becomes a fetus, and is born as a baby. But these characteristics are yet to come. The embryo is pre-human, relating to the human baby as a larva does to a butterfly.

The embryo's potential to become a human being must not be confused with the actuality: a fertilized chicken egg has the potentiality to become a chicken, but is not a chicken until that potential is actualized. Vegetarians eat eggs but not chickens. Thus, one may well believe that life begins at conception. But the life in question is as yet only potentially human and, at its beginning, pre-human. From a religious viewpoint this may make no difference. Even if only potentially human (or, for that matter, potentially alive), the fertilized ovum is God's creation, not to be disposed of as though parental property. Moreover, according to teleological ideas accepted by most religions, the aim of conception is procreation; we are not to interfere with this divine purpose. (I forgo discussing prescriptive natural law, since, without religion, nature has no prescriptive authority.)

From a secular viewpoint the fact that what is conceived is not, as yet, human life may make a difference. The proposition "life begins at conception" may constitute a secular argument against abortion if one believes that life should not be aborted. However, we routinely slaughter and abort animals. Hence, to oppose abortion on secular grounds, one must believe that life conceived by humans is actually human from conception; or else, that no *potentially* human life should be aborted. Both these propositions rely on definitions and prescriptions that come close to collapsing what seems a secular argument against abortion into a religious one.

It is the embryo that might be aborted, not what it will, but has not yet, become. If it, as yet, lacks the distinctly human characteristics that might entitle it to social protection on purely secular grounds, one must ask: When does intra-uterine life become human life? What characteristics are distinctively human? One may disagree on the sufficient characteristics. However, there is little disagreement on the necessary ones. Surely these are absent in the first 12 weeks after conception. The embryo has neither a brain nor the neural system which makes sentience possible.

Before sentience the embryo cannot be aware of itself, or of losing a future by not being allowed to develop. Anti-abortionists may argue, nonetheless, that we have no more right to deprive the embryo of its future than we have to deprive an unconscious person of his future. Perhaps. But the embryo (unlike the unconscious person) cannot in any meaningful sense own itself. If it does not belong to God, it belongs to its parents. Only upon acquiring a functioning brain and neural system, after the first trimester, does it become possible, though not yet probable, for the fetus even to feel pain. At this point the fetus also starts to resemble an embryonic human being. One may allow the embryo to develop further or abort it. However, after the first trimester abortion seems justifiable only by the gravest of reasons, such as danger to the mother; for what is being aborted undeniably resembles a human being to an uncomfortable degree.

After the first trimester, inconvenience to parents hardly seems a grave enough reason for abortion. However, it may not be in the best interest of the fetus to be born. Surely that is the case if the fetus is highly defective, or likely to live a short or abnormally painful life. Parents may, or may not, be willing to bear the burden of a permanently impaired child, which they would have to carry if the fetus is known to be gravely defective. But it is the burden to the child that must be pondered above all. Life is not a good under all circumstances. Thus, when it is likely to be a net burden for the fetus to live after birth, persons who do not adhere to traditional religious beliefs may argue for abortion.

In the first 12 weeks after conception, the embryo has neither a brain nor the neural system which makes sentience possible.

HOWEVER MUCH the motivation derives from religious tradition, the legal prohibition of abortion is not unconstitutional in a secular state. Religion may enjoin us to feed the hungry and to eschew murder. Yet neither welfare nor criminal homicide statutes are unconstitutional—unless no purpose other than catering to religious beliefs can be demonstrated. If laws can be supported by a secular argument, or a secular public interest, religious traditions which may motivate legislators and their supporters are constitutionally irrelevant.

There are rational secular arguments against abortion. For example, one may insist that the fetus is human and

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abortion therefore homicide; or that life is a good the living are not entitled to withhold from the unborn. Whether these arguments are persuasive matters little. They are rational enough. Other rational arguments independent of religion are available. Hence legislatures were thought constitutionally entitled to prohibit abortion—until the Supreme Court, in *Roe* v. *Wade*, found a right to abortion in the U.S. Constitution, and made state prohibitions unconstitutional.

In *Griswold* v. *Connecticut* the Supreme Court had held that a Connecticut law violated a constitutional right to sexual privacy by prohibiting the sale of contraceptives. In *Roe* the right to abortion was derived from the privacy right found in *Griswold*. However, the Constitution nowhere mentions a right to privacy, or to sexual privacy, let alone to contraception or abortion. Nor can such rights be logically derived from anything directly articulated in the Constitution. Hence the sexual-privacy right recognized in *Griswold* admittedly had to be derived from "emanations" of the "penumbrae" (not visible to the naked non-judicial eye) of the Bill of Rights.

The Connecticut law struck down in *Griswold* (which had not been enforced for a long time) certainly was silly. But silliness is not *per se* unconstitutional. Prohibitions of sodomy, or of prostitution, or of the sale of contraceptives, may strike one as silly, but they are not unconstitutional, if rational arguments for them can be found.

Nobody wants to overturn *Griswold* and allow states to prohibit the sale of contraceptives. *Roe* v. *Wade*, which takes from the states the right to prohibit abortion, is quite another matter, although it rests on the same right to sexual privacy which the Constitution so discreetly fails to mention. Significant groups want to overturn *Roe*. They might succeed. The possible abrogation of *Roe*, or its likely erosion, would return to the states the right to deal with abortion in some measure. Enabled to make their own decisions, California and New York, and many other states, are likely to permit abortion. Some states will again prohibit it; but this mainly will stimulate travel.

Permitting abortion does not necessarily mean subsidizing it. There is not much reason for a subsidy. Usually the pregnant woman volunteered for acts and omissions that risked pregnancy and should not ask taxpayers to pay for the consequences. Pregnancy is not a disease. A pregnant woman does not have the moral claim on the public purse that a woman suffering from a disease contracted because of factors beyond her control might have. Further, taxpayers who on moral grounds oppose abortion object to being compelled to subsidize it. To be sure, subsidizing abortion may well save taxpayers' money: if the aborted fetuses had become babies dependent on public welfare, they would cost more than the subsidy used for abortion. However, even if this were so, opponents will oppose the use of their taxes to subsidize it—the financial advantage would not offset the perceived immorality they would be compelled to support.

EMERGENT technological changes may make much of the legal-abortion debate academic. A French drug company has produced an abortifacient pill (RU-486) which makes expulsion of the fertilized ovum cheap and easy and requires little if any medical supervision. As it is perfected the pill could well solve the legal and financial problem for most women who want an abortion in the very early stages of pregnancy.

Currently no American drug company will sell the French drug, for fear of boycotts and lawsuits. Even in France its distribution is still highly restricted. Yet experience suggests that, once a cheap technology is available, its use cannot be prevented for long. The pill will be smuggled in and will become readily available, ultimately to be legalized.

The moral debate is not affected by this technological development. Abortion will remain a moral problem for many, owing to the clash of Christian traditions and current secular attitudes. Yet the moral problem is likely to be felt less. There is not much rational difference between the surgical removal of an extant embryo and the chemical prevention of its development. Yet there is a major difference in perception. Often, ova are expelled naturally even after fertilization. The abortifacient pill may well be seen as simply helping this process along (although morally the intention of the person taking it makes the difference). All this is likely to make for greater acceptability.

THE OVERWHELMING majority of Americans are devoted, in some degree, to religious beliefs in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Yet, most Americans do not believe that abortion should be a crime. This inconsistency will assure continuation of the debate.

A principled and intense minority of Americans think of abortion as murder. Yet the great majority have come to believe, albeit inchoately, that they own and can dispose of their bodies, including fertilized ova and even embryos. At the least they believe the government should not interfere. For this reason it will be impossible to recriminalize abortion, whatever the outcome of current legislative and judicial skirmishes. Americans feel overwhelmingly that the matter should be left to the individual conscience, and that the minority cannot impose their beliefs, however conscientiously held, on the majority. Political parties cannot ignore the handwriting on the wall.

Each of the political parties is split on the issue. Democrats have rallied to the popular "pro-choice" standard. But their traditional constituents include ethnic minorities strongly influenced by religious beliefs. Republicans have courted defeat by opposing the popular view or, worse, waffling. (Their position has a great deal to do with opposition to the improper overreaching of the Supreme Court in *Roe* v. *Wade* but is perceived simply as "anti-abortion.") But not all Republicans are willing to go down for the sake of prohibiting abortion. The anti-abortionists who urge them to do so hardly serve their own cause.

As *Roe* v. *Wade* recedes and states become free to impose their own regulations, they would do well to permit the French pill (which is effective only in the first trimester of pregnancy) and to strongly discourage and regulate later abortions, except in very specific and limited cases, such as danger to the mother. There is no reason for the Federal Government to bear any of the costs—more reason, but perhaps not enough, for the states to do so. There is little hope that a rational and practical settlement along these lines can be formalized soon. But it might evolve informally. □

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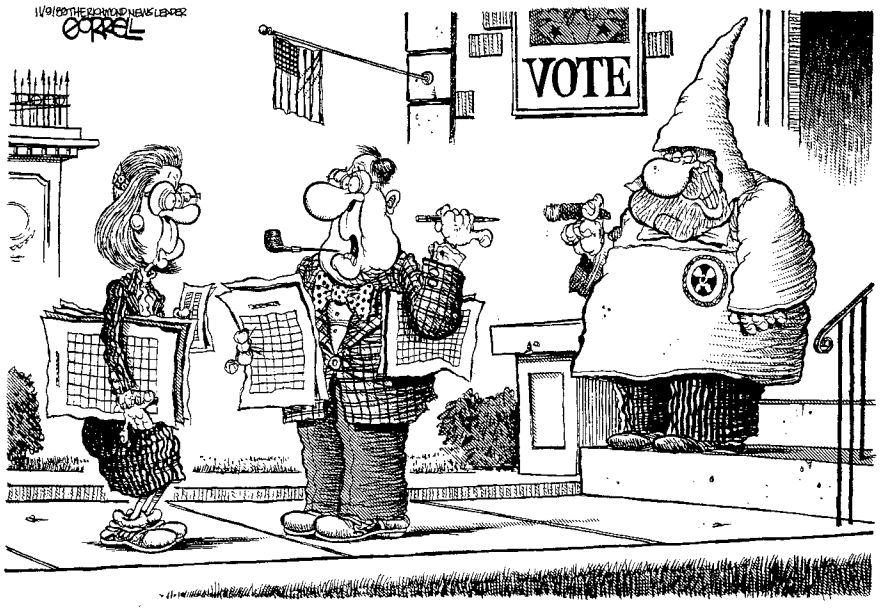
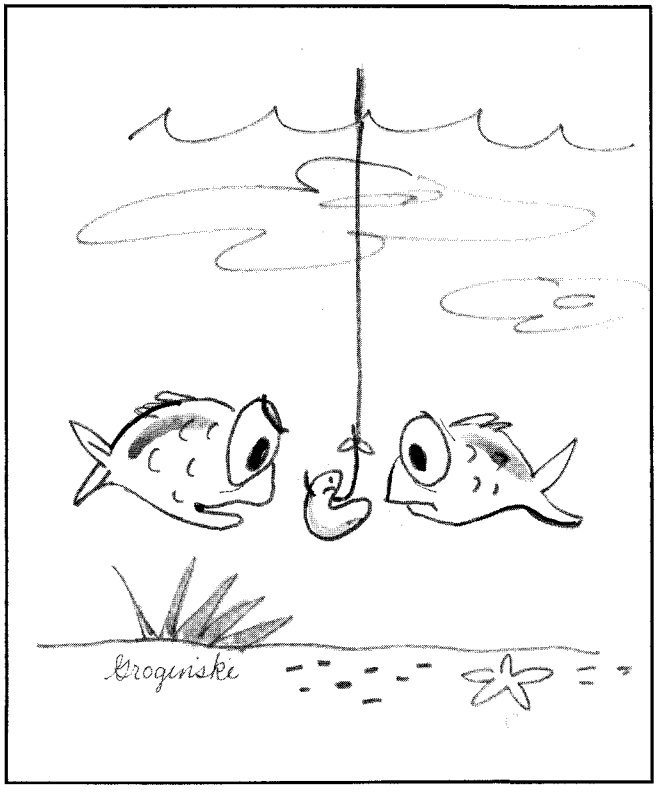
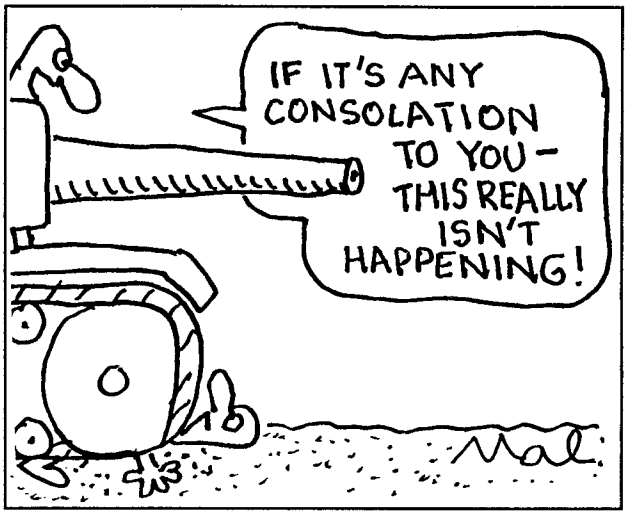
help



"I'm not sure we should trust our exit polls. . . . This guy claims he just voted for Wilder!"



"Beware of gifts with strings attached."



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Back When

In my humble opinion, James Thurber
Should be fed to the tots with their Gerber.
What shame and what pity
Kids don't know Walt Mitty
Or Muggs the implacable cur. *Grr!*

MILES DAVID MOORE

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THE GLOBE IS HOTTER. I'M HOTTER. WE'RE ALL DOOMED.
(GURGLE) IT'S...THE... GREEN...(KOF)... HOUSE... EFFECT... (GASP)
TURN OFF WORLD INDUSTRY —EARTH IS SUFFOCATING!
BOYCOTT CO_2! DON'T BREATHE!
The INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HYPOCHONDRIACS
H. Payne
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PEOPLE'S MEAT BY-PRODUCTS
DER BEAKS UND SCHNOUTS

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A NON-CATASTROPHIC PROPOSAL

Freeing Health Care

Liberals proclaim their devotion to the dream of high-quality health care for all, while pursuing policies that make decent health care increasingly unaffordable and unavailable. There is a solution—if conservative lawmakers aren't too punch-drunk to propose it.

STUART BUTLER

FOR THE first time in most people's memory, Republican politicians are being cheered by audiences other than doctors when they make speeches about health. More remarkable still, the applause is coming from elderly Americans. But the elderly are apoplectic about the Medicare catastrophic-illness tax enacted last year, and it's Republicans who are leading the campaign for repeal. Suddenly they are saints. It's a pleasant change for lawmakers used to being vilified for their "lack of concern" on health issues—that is, their unwillingness to vote for new spending programs.

But Republicans should contain their euphoria. Seniors now applauding them for voting to repeal the catastrophic-illness tax will soon be denouncing their new-found heroes if Republicans resist taxing someone else to pay for increased Medicare benefits. And there are plenty of other storms brewing. The Pepper Commission, named after the late Florida lawmaker who saw Congress as an open cash register for the elderly, is likely next year to propose a massive program to provide long-term nursing-home benefits to middle-class seniors. And then there's Senator Ted Kennedy, pushing legislation to force business to pick up the tab for a national health system. Other lawmakers are looking at Canada as a health-care utopia and urging Congress to adopt a similar "free" tax-financed system (these same politicians used to point to Britain as the promised land until the National Health Service began to fall apart). Republicans trying to curb federal spending or improve American competitiveness will no doubt vote against such proposals. Then they will be denounced for their lack of compassion. Back to normal.

The reason that health care is a no-win game for Republicans in general, and conservatives in particular, is that they still have not accepted that most Americans are determined that there should be affordable health care for everybody. Now, maybe that's an unreasonable demand. Maybe it can't be achieved. But that desire is the driving reality in the politics of health care. To the average voter, liberals are the ones who care. Until conservatives lay out a plausible strategy to achieve universal access to affordable health care they will never capture the initiative.

A CONSERVATIVE health-care proposal must begin by presenting voters with a clear picture of the policy choices facing the country. Failure to do this in the past has caused Americans to drift down what is apparently the only available road—on a map drawn by liberals. A conservative health plan must be based on sound political and economic principles. Conservatives need to point out that legislation pushed by Democrats has been doing two things: encouraging Americans to demand more and more health services, while imposing price controls on the health-care industry in an effort to control that insatiable demand.

The shape of things to come under this policy can best be imagined by considering trends in the public sector. The Democrats have been buying votes for years by committing the Medicare and Medicaid programs to paying for an ever-expanding array of free or below-cost services for the elderly and the poor. In an attempt to contain the hemorrhaging outlays caused by this policy, the government has introduced increasingly stringent controls on the medical industry. As with all price controls, the result has been suffocating bureaucracy, together with distortions and cutbacks in services. For instance, Medicare price controls on hospitals during the Reagan Administration quickly led to hospitals "dumping" costly patients.

The red tape and rationing can only become more extensive as demand continues to outstrip supply. The history of price controls is very clear on this. Controls introduced in one part of an industry lead suppliers to seek higher profits in the uncontrolled part. The govern-

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ment then feels compelled to extend controls to the sector previously allowed to operate freely. The process is then repeated until the entire industry is under controls. That is what is happening slowly but surely in Medicare. President Reagan tried to control hospital costs, and the result was an explosion in uncontrolled Medicare physician costs. Now, with the support of the Bush Administration, Congress has enacted sweeping new controls on prices charged by Medicare physicians. It is very likely that a number of physicians will respond to this by refusing to accept Medicare patients. The government's probable reaction? Rules to make them do so. The eventual result? The system of bureaucratic rationing and declining quality that prevails in Britain and is now developing in Canada. Chronic shortages and waiting lists in Britain have induced Margaret Thatcher's government to take the political risk of trying to reform the system. And while the Canadian system is a far more recent creation, it is already showing similar painful signs of stress, with strikes by physicians and frequent breakdowns in care caused by shortages of essential equipment or staff.

Conservatives need to explain that just when hundreds of thousands of Eastern Europeans are fleeing from economies destroyed by the illusion that "free" goods can be delivered by bureaucratic controls, America is trying to create a public-sector health system based on that discredited idea. Meanwhile, federal tax policy has also done its best to wreck any semblance of a functioning market in the private sector. By treating employer-provided health plans as tax-free income for workers, the tax code has encouraged unions to demand that a rising proportion of employee compensation be given in the form of health services. But with health care paid for by employers, often with little or none of the cost shared by employees, neither workers nor the physicians and hospitals serving them have much incentive to question the need for costly treatments. The result: inflation in the health sector has been running at about double the average for the economy, and companies are desperately cutting back on coverage to control escalating costs. Meanwhile, those not covered by tax-free company plans—typically the self-employed and those in small firms—must pay the full, after-tax cost of health insurance or services. Thanks in large part to these perverse tax incentives, the U.S. spends over 11 per cent of its GNP on health care, and yet as many as 37 million Americans lack coverage.

Conservatives need to argue that the only system that can guarantee affordable access is one in which a competitive market regulates costs by serving the consumer as efficiently as possible, while the government confines itself to making sure that everyone has sufficient funds to purchase an adequate supply of care. In short, conservatives should not deny the goal of access to affordable health care, as they have done in the past. Instead, they should argue that only by changing direction completely, introducing a real market in health care rather than trying to suppress all vestiges of pricing and competition, will Americans ever achieve affordable health care for all.

The foundation of such a market-based health system is a fundamental change in the tax treatment of health costs, combined with assistance for the needy. Under this health-care *perestroika*, laid out in detail in a recent Heritage Foundation monograph, all health-care benefits currently provided by employers would henceforth be treated as taxable income to the employee. In place of that tax exclusion there would be a new system of tax credits in the personal-income-tax code, to protect families from unreasonable costs of health insurance or out-of-pocket medical expenses. Specifically, under the Heritage proposal, there would be a 20 per cent credit for the purchase of health insurance that met certain basic requirements (the most important being protection from catastrophic costs). In addition, there would be a credit for out-of-pocket health expenses. The higher these expenditures were as a percentage of family income, the larger the percentage credit.

With this change in tax treatment, workers would no longer be trapped within a "one-size-fits-all" plan. They would be able instead to shop around for the plan best designed to meet their family's needs. They would be encouraged to seek the most economic insurance and health services, since even with a tax credit they would be paying part of the cost. Thus choice and competition among insurers would be increased significantly, leading to the same pressure in health care to hold down costs while maintaining quality that prevails in other industries subject to market conditions.

IN ADDITION to the tax change, there would be a legal requirement on heads of households to obtain basic health insurance to protect the family at least from catastrophic medical costs, with help if necessary from the government. Thus, tax incentives and freedom of choice would be accompanied with an obligation to buy at least a minimum package.

Reforming the tax treatment of health-care expenditures would not just encourage more efficient purchases of health care by those currently under company plans. It would also have a dramatic effect on the uninsured. The efficiency pressures unleashed by consumer choice would help moderate health costs for those unable to afford adequate care. Even more important, instituting tax breaks for families rather than corporations would mean giving a self-employed person, or a worker in a small firm

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lacking a health plan, the same advantage as an employee of General Motors.

Giving tax breaks directly to families also would enable the government to target tax assistance to those who need it most—which is impossible under the current system. The larger tax credits for families spending a high proportion of their income on health care would be "paid for" by reduced tax-revenue losses on healthy families choosing economical plans. There could even be a provision for sending a check to the family if the available credit exceeded the family's tax liability. That would be more expensive, of course, but it would mean low-income workers would not feel forced to go on welfare if illness strikes their family, in order to be eligible for Medicaid.

SUCH A RADICAL change in policy necessarily raises some fundamental questions about the role of markets in health care. While the vast majority of Americans recognize that competitive markets routinely outperform government planning and controls in delivering goods and services, many—including more than a few conservatives—dismiss the idea that markets and competition can really apply to health care. For one thing there is the emergency nature of many health services. Someone can spend several weekends comparing new cars or houses before deciding which one to buy, but examining price lists is not something one normally thinks of doing in an ambulance after a heart attack. For another thing, there is the question of consumer ignorance. A physician suggesting lithotripter treatment for kidney stones might as well be recommending a witch doctor as far as most Americans are concerned. Medicine is a complex, technical area in which the supplier dominates the confused and passive consumer—the argument goes—so notions of competition and consumer choice are a sham.

But this understandable skepticism overlooks the way in which "consumerism" actually works in a highly technical industry. In practice, there would be two distinct levels of competition. With tax credits for out-of-pocket health expenses, more Americans would pay directly for routine non-emergency services such as dental work, annual physicals, and treatment for minor ailments. In these cases, where the procedures involved are fairly standard, consumer choice would revolve more around such issues as price, waiting time, and choice of physician—items that have small medical significance but can have enormous implications for cost.

Informed competition would also operate at the level of insurance to cover large health bills and emergency care, even though most Americans have little understanding of medical technicalities. To understand this seeming paradox, imagine a man buying a new car. He probably knows nothing about which design of carburetor is most efficient, or what gear ratios ensure the best acceleration. But he doesn't need to. He is buying the car as a package. He is guided by informed opinions of the price and performance of the package as a whole, probably gained from trusted friends or reliable consumer columns in magazines and newspapers. And the dissemination of such consumer information puts intense pressure on manufacturers to achieve the best quality and design of components at the best price.

The same is true of health insurance, or of pre-paid plans such as health-maintenance organizations. With tax reforms to encourage greater choice, strong competition among insurers providing "packages" of health services would lead knowledgeable insurers to review carefully the treatments provided by doctors and hospitals in their plan. But these private-sector controllers, unlike government bureaucrats, would not be inclined to cut costs simply by reducing services. If they did so they would quickly lose customers to competing insurers.

There are some critics of applying markets to health care who agree that competition and changes in the tax code could well mean better-quality care at lower cost, but fear that insurers would want to boost profits by covering only healthy people. Some insurers no doubt would focus on that part of the market. But other insurers would compete to cover families with higher health risks—at a higher price—just as companies compete vigorously for different segments of the life-insurance market.

Would this mean higher insurance costs for some families? Yes, but because of the tax changes these families would get more help from government to offset higher premium costs. Would it mean better coverage for these families? Yes, because competing insurers specializing in the high-priced segment of the market would design plans more in tune with the needs of that special group, perhaps including hospitals and physicians with more experience in treating particular illnesses. Today, most families with chronic or unusual illnesses have to make do with company plans designed for the average family.

What about the poor and the elderly? Under Medicaid the poor receive, free of charge, treatment for most major illnesses and many routine services. But the availability of high-quality treatment is constrained by the escalating cost of Medicaid. The elderly face similar constraints and service limitations under Medicare.

Reform would help the poor and the elderly by taking the pressure out of general health costs, which would lower the costs of federal and state plans, permitting the government to finance services to needy Americans now lacking essential care. In addition, in a more competitive health-care marketplace, with a wider range of specialized plans, government could enroll the poor and the elderly in private insurance plans offering the best combination of services and price—essentially a medical voucher system.

IT HAS TO BE admitted that so far in Congress there is no sign of a sweeping new reform proposal along these lines. The talk continues to be of widening eligibility for government programs combined with even tighter controls on the health-care industry, or of Kennedy-style mandates that would stick business with the tab. But that is the orthodoxy in Washington only because Republicans and conservatives allow it to be so. Americans are drawn to the liberal agenda on health care only because it is the only game in town.

It's time for a new model to capture the imagination, using tools that Americans understand well—competition, choice, and tax incentives. There is enough uncertainty in Washington about the cost of the liberal agenda for a market-based alternative to gain serious consideration. The danger is that after years of taking a political beating over health care, conservatives in Congress may be too punch-drunk to propose it. □

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LETTER FROM TAIPEI

You Can't Go Home Again

To a Republic of China already in the midst of social and political flux, Tiananmen Square came as a fulfillment of prophecies of the evil of Communism, a reminder of how much had changed since 1949.

MARY McSHERRY

THE KEY WORD in today's Republic of China is *reality*. It pops up in every newspaper, every government office. Lee Teng-hui, the first Taiwan-born president of the country, started it all in a press conference following his trip in March to Singapore. While there, he was introduced as "the President of Taiwan," and reporters were lying in wait to quiz him: Shouldn't he have protested not being given his official designation: President of the Republic of China?

Lee gave his pragmatic answer: the important thing is to establish workable relationships with other countries "instead of being picky about names." He concluded with his now often quoted line: "I am not satisfied, but I have to accept it."

Lee Teng-hui's acceptance may not have sounded like a stop-press item to the rest of the world, but in Taipei it had real news value. For 42 years spokesmen for the Republic of China had lost no opportunity to insist that the elected government that had escaped to Taiwan in 1949 was the only legal government of all China. Except for the representatives of the province of Taiwan, the legislators of this government continued to represent provinces in which they had not set foot for ever-increasing years. The political faith was that someday that government would sweep back and again lead its great, temporarily usurped land.

The tenet of unification still claims its place in the ROC's political heart, but in Taipei the country across the Taiwan Strait is now as likely to be called "the People's Republic" as "the Mainland." Since the late President Chiang Ching-kuo lifted martial law in 1987, citizens of Taiwan may visit relatives in the PRC. Nearly half a million have made the trip. For the most part, they have returned shaking their heads at the backwardness and poverty of their former home. Andrew Cheng, a young teacher turned publicist, says with real shock, "In our home village, the brother of my father, my uncle—he is *pulling the cart*. I mean—" he mimes the bent back, the straining arms—"by *himself*. Not even a water buffalo. My father says they have made no progress in forty years."

SO—UNIFICATION, yes, but way down the road. Someday. President Lee has set his and his country's face toward what he calls "the Taiwan experience"—the demonstrable forty years' progress from a poor, unimportant island to the "little tiger" of Asia with $73 billion of foreign reserves. He has bade farewell to the romantic formulae of the past and encouraged Taiwan to get on with the reality of today.

Nowhere was this more evident than in Chiang Kai-shek Square on the night of September 12, one hundred days after Deng Hsiao-ping turned his tanks on the unarmed students in Tiananmen Square. Wuer Kai-hsi, those students' chief spokesman, had asked, from his sanctuary in Paris, that Chinese all over the world hold memorial services on that day for the students who were slain. In Hong Kong, twenty thousand people responded. But in Taipei—where, on June 3 and 4, some ten thousand men and women had thronged to show support for their beleaguered compatriots in Peking—only a few hundred showed up. Though for forty years the Nationalists had excoriated the Communists and warned of their evils, now when Deng & Co. had demonstrated their evil to the fullest—nothing happened. The students in Tiananmen Square had been compatriots, brothers, but brothers who could not be saved from their own ironically named People's Liberation Army. It was a fact the people in Taiwan had wept over—and then put behind them. Like Lee Teng-hui, they had said, "I am not satisfied, but I have to accept it."

At the time of Tiananmen, the acceptance had not been universal. "There were some," as Wei Yung of the Yang-ming Institution on National Research and Development

Mrs. McSherry has recently returned from the Republic of China and is currently working on a book about Ireland.

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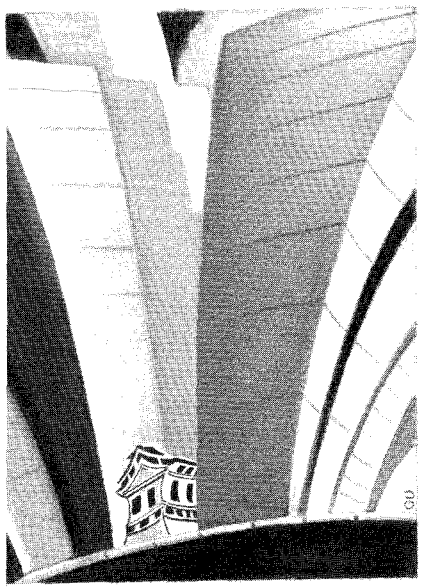
put it, "who criticized the government for what they called a weak response. They wanted to *do* something."

It is easy to believe that this was so, easy to imagine that to old soldiers and senior statesmen whose forty years of exile had been pointed toward the Moment of Return, the days of Tiananmen must have looked like the now-or-never time. And perhaps they were right. History is full of lost opportunities. But the fact is that the army and navy and air force had been put on full alert, not because the glorious moment was at hand, but because of the possibility that Taiwan might be attacked. It had seemed all too likely that Deng, to shift his people's attention from the killings in Tiananmen Square, might blame the whole pro-democracy movement on Taiwan and take diversionary action. When he did not, the Republic of China's forces did not move. The old soldiers could only line up behind President Lee's promise of moral support for the besieged students.

"Rule number one," says Wei Yung: "Don't promise more than you can deliver."

Rule number two might be to find out what is deliverable. Citizens in Taiwan had raised money to help the students—millions of dollars. The money was refused. The ROC Red Cross had collected thousands of quarts of blood. The Red Cross in the PRC would not accept it. The government had offered passports and monthly subsidies to Mainland students in foreign countries. But the students had families in the PRC. They knew what could happen to the families of those considered traitors. Very few accepted the offer.



Gary Underhill

"We believe the most effective thing we can do to help the democracy movement is continue—even increase—our contacts with the people over there." The speaker is Yu-ming Shaw, now the chief government spokesman, formerly a professor of history at Notre Dame. A bespectacled, middle-aged man, he speaks quietly, still the professor. "Perhaps this sounds contradictory: we ask America to curtail her contacts while we increase ours, but each must do what he can. America can put an embargo on the sale of arms. She can call a halt to loans. This is effective because she is stopping something she has done—something the PRC wants to continue. But we have *not* sold arms. We have *not* lent money. We have no favors to withhold. So what we do is continue the contacts. Keep up the flow. Export the Taiwan experience. This is realistic. It will be effective. We believe it has already been effective—that the visits of our people to the Mainland were one of the main triggers of the democracy movement." Sensing skepticism, he leans forward earnestly. "Look: I am a historian, and I am Chinese. If you ask, 'Will Russia give up Communism? Will Eastern Europe?' I have to say, 'I do not know.' But about China I know. Here is why: there are twenty million Chinese here—free and prosperous. There are thirty million overseas Chinese—free and prosperous. When one of these fifty million Chinese goes back to the Mainland—free to travel, money to travel, money to take expensive gifts—the man over there thinks, 'Wait a minute. He is Chinese. I am Chinese. Yet he has so much, and I have so little. He is no smarter than I am. How come?' "

Wang Chien-shien, Vice Minister for Economic Affairs, answers the question wryly. "There are smart people over there, but the system won't let smart people do smart things."

"It's the system," Dr. Shaw nods positively. "And they know it. So they will get rid of it. It will happen." For a second the Notre Dame professor peeks out: "It will take faith *and* good works."

But the ROC has predicted the demise of Communism for a long time. When will it come?

Georgetown-trained Professor Chao Chun-shun of the Institute of Asian Studies smiles. "The Chinese are very patient. We have a way—you call it *muddle through*. We say, 'Wait and see.' We can wait."

In the meantime, there are more immediate matters in Taiwan that cannot wait: Taipei's traffic, which makes New York City look like a bucolic retreat; environmental pollution; the too-rapid growth of cities, resulting in what Minister of the Interior Hsu Shui-teh characterizes as "people getting jammed close, but growing more distant." These are critical, but not unique to Taiwan.

One problem *is* unique: the skyrocketing stock market that is turning the old Chinese culture upside down. The Taiex—Taiwan's equivalent of the Dow—in less than four years has shot from 600 to more than 10,400. Housewives, noodle vendors, people who freely admit that they know nothing about stocks, are reveling in instant profits. "Three million transactions a day," the ROC's major economist, Frederick Chien, reports, shaking his head. "In a country of twenty million!"

This stock mania has spawned an easy-money atmosphere of alarming scope. A Taipei apartment that two years ago could have been bought for the equivalent of $120,000 is now a half-million. Painters, carpenters, masons can demand—and get—twice the wage of a year ago. Workers are quitting other jobs and flocking to stockbrokers' offices, eager to serve even as errand boys, tea makers, because their year-end bonus will surpass most office workers' annual wage.

Fast money. Some get it even faster. Incidents of robbery have escalated. Kidnapping for ransom is a real threat for well-to-do parents. "Our culture is sick," says legislator Jaw Shaw-king. Jaw is one of the members of the ruling Kuomintang party known as the Young Turks. "People will do anything for money." And crime is not confined to financial gain. For the first time, a female visitor is warned: Do not go out alone at night.

But these problems, though real and crucial, are not the most urgent matter in today's Taiwan. Top priority, as I write, goes to the December 2 election.

The election is not just important. It is a historic event: the first all-Taiwan election which will be contested by legal opposition parties. And there has been such a

(Continues on page 50)

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The Victory of Robert Bork

ORRIN G. HATCH

When President Reagan nominated Robert H. Bork to the Supreme Court in the summer of 1987, a carefully staged firestorm of opposition erupted, although no question was ever raised about Judge Bork's qualifications. But those who would manipulate the law to their own political ends knew that they would have no friend in Bob Bork were he confirmed. Their misrepresentations of his record denied Bork a seat on the Court, but their short-term victory was Pyrrhic. Bork is back.

The Tempting of America discusses that confirmation battle, but only briefly. The heart of the book deals with the very nature of judging, and so with the future of this nation. For those who have followed Robert Bork's distinguished career—as law professor, Solicitor General of the United States, Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and prolific writer on legal subjects—this book has been eagerly awaited. Seldom have high expectations been so completely fulfilled. It is a work of monumental dimension, and addresses the central legal question of our time: Are we to be governed by our elected representatives, as the Constitution explicitly provides, or by an unelected judiciary?

The Tempting of America: The Political Seduction of the Law, by Robert H. Bork (Free Press, 448 pp., $22.50)

Judge Bork believes that federal judges are required, in interpreting the Constitution, to enforce that document as its language dictates, and as its meaning was originally understood. I will not attempt to further elaborate on the theory of original understanding, which Judge Bork himself explained in the last issue of *NR*, except to point out that he gives a succinct, irrefutable answer to those who cite authorities other than the language of the Constitution: "The truth is that the judge who looks outside the historic Constitution always looks inside himself and nowhere else." The theory of original understanding (also "interpretivism") is democracy in essence, and deviation from the theory—"noninterpretivism," in the scholarly jargon—is nothing less than a surrender to the anti-democratic forces that prefer, in Judge Bork's words, "rule by talented and benevolent autocrats over the self-government of ordinary folk."

In a lengthy historical treatment, Bork demonstrates in detail the regrettable consequences that have usually followed when the original understanding has been abandoned. He cites the Court's creation of a constitutional right to own slaves (*Dred Scott* v. *Sanford*), its rejection of a state law protecting workers from unreasonably long working days (*Lochner* v. *New York*), its formulation of a right to abortion (*Roe* v. *Wade*), and its remarkable conclusion that burning an American flag is a form of constitutionally protected speech (*Texas* v. *Johnson*). He might also have mentioned the Court's rejection of the original understanding of the Establishment Clause which allowed it to prohibit prayer in public schools (*Engle* v. *Vitale*).

He also exposes the legal elite, many in academia, who are currently shaping our laws to serve their ideologies, and effectively demonstrates the peculiar way in which those scholars are "simultaneously sophisticated and anti-intellectual." Still, he treats the dissenters seriously, and discusses the most prominent theorists of constitutional law "now regnant in the law schools." Each theorist asks, in essence, What is so bad about allowing judges—the elite of our legal profession—to decide questions of law pursuant to their own philosophies of good and evil? Here, Bork answers with the observation that this approach asks judges to be moral philosophers, not lawyers. While the idea might appeal to some, it contains an inherent flaw. As Bork notes, "if the people can be educated to understand and accept a superior moral philosophy, there would be no need for constitutional judges since legislation would embody the principles of that morality." And an additional irony has not escaped Judge Bork's comment: "If the greatest minds of our culture have not succeeded in devising a moral system to which all intellectually honest persons must subscribe, it seems doubtful, to say the least, that some law professors will make the breakthrough any time soon."

Suffice it to say, Bork discusses the academic theorists with a critical eye, and after disposing of the liberals, he takes on the conservative revisionists in a further, even-handed critique. As a truly consistent intellect, Bork summarizes the point by stating:

> If the performance of the Court changes, it is to be hoped that liberal revisionism will not be replaced by conservative revisionism. The two are equally illegitimate. The Constitution is too important to our national well-being and to our liberties to be made into a political weapon.

Of course, Bork's critique is not limited to academics but condemns all infidelity to the Constitution, including that which occurs in Congress. Based on his own experience, he states that "many senators have no idea that constitutional law is about anything other than results they like." I wish I were able to say he is wrong, but, regrettably, there is truth to the criticism.

Bork does a very interesting job of contrasting noninterpretivism with his own approach in a review of pertinent cases. This historical survey reveals that the principal engine driving the anti-interpretivist school—whether liberal or conservative—has been the doctrine of "substantive due process." There are, Bork points out, two forms of the doctrine:

Senator Hatch of Utah is ranking minority member on the Labor and Human Resources Committee, and a member of the Judiciary Committee.

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> The first consists in applying the substance of various provisions of the Bill of Rights against state legislation on the theory that the Fourteenth Amendment's due-process clause "incorporates" those provisions. [Were it not] for the incorporation, the Bill of Rights would restrain only the Federal Government. This theory has at least the merit of confining the courts to the enforcement of principles actually in the Constitution. There is, however, a second form of substantive due process in which courts create principles of freedom—freedom to own slaves, freedom to make contracts—that are nowhere to be found in the Constitution. It is proper that the Court recede from its highly interventionist stance under this second version, because it involves pure judicial legislation.

His survey clearly reveals the roots of the judicial activism that is plaguing our courts today. He concludes that the theory of substantive due process has "provided a warrant for later Courts to legislate at will." Once again, Bork is the champion, where the Constitution is silent, of upholding the constitutional plan for representative democracy. He is an advocate of federalism, embodied in the Tenth Amendment.

Of course, some of the new rights created by the Supreme Court over the past 130 years have been beneficial, and should be supported when statutorily enacted, or made part of a state's own constitution. The principle of one man, one vote will strike some as a good example. When the Court mandated in the early 1960s that all state legislatures must be organized by per-capita representation—outlawing apportionment according to geographical boundaries—they clearly invented a rule out of thin air, as Bork demonstrates at some length; the rule, whatever its effects for good or ill, is simply not in the Constitution. I should know. As a member of a legislative body where the citizens of the Dakotas have exactly the same representation as the combined populations of California and New York, I am regularly reminded of the groundless nature of the Court's view that representation on a basis other than equal population is somehow antithetical to American values. Indeed, the organization of the Senate, by the principle of equality of the states, enjoys a remarkably exalted status among American values: it is the only right that, under the terms of Article V, cannot be amended out of the Constitution—except with the consent of the affected state.

My favorite chapter in this book of favorite chapters is "The Supreme Court and the Temptations of Politics," where one who highlights as he reads, as I do, must highlight virtually every paragraph, line, and word on every page. Repeatedly, the point is made, and illustrated through fine examples, that the Court has been frequently seduced by the siren song of substantive due process, thus second-guessing the moral choices of the nation's voters and their elected representatives, and substituting a system of value that is none other than the personal preference of the judges.

> What is worrisome is that so many of the Court's [frequent] declarations of unconstitutionality are not even plausibly related to the actual Constitution. This means that we are increasingly governed not by law or elected representatives but by an unelected, unrepresentative, unaccountable committee of lawyers applying no will but their own.

He concludes: "when the Court decides it is the instrument of the general will and the keeper of the national conscience . . . there is no law . . . only the moral imperatives and self-righteousness of the hour."

Despite the sometimes technical nature of the subject, *The Tempting of America* is aimed at a general reader interested in the forces shaping American law. Time and again, Bork cogently states in the simplest terms what legal scholars have done their best to obscure, and by placing the story of his own ordeal in the larger context of the war waged for the minds of the nation's judges, Bork has invested the book with a significance that no simple autobiographical account could have had. I must leave to others, who are not members of the Senate, the discussion of Bork's justified criticism of the Judiciary Committee hearings and subsequent floor vote. But I must say he is accurate and yet genteel about those who denied him a place on the bench, and thereby rejected one of the century's most able and astute jurists.

I suppose revisionists will argue that Bork has an unusual, if not unseemly, devotion to the infallibility of the original text of the Constitution. However, it is his contention—and mine as well—that this grand document has endured (and will endure) for the benefit of all long after the feeble whimperings of those so bent on revising it have faded.

It is rare that those at the center of history happen also to be great scholars or writers of a talent sufficient to explain momentous events. Churchill is the outstanding exception to the rule. Now we know that Judge Bork is another. □

The Imitable Voice

JOSEPH SOBRAN

So far, the big news of the Bush era has been Ronald Reagan falling off a horse. I can't help it: when a friend refers to "the President," I automatically think he means Reagan. Say what you like, the current Administration lacks all the pizzazz of its predecessor. We've gone from a Cinemascope, Technicolor Presidency to a black-and-white one with scratchy sound.

Speaking My Mind, by Ronald Reagan (Simon & Schuster, 427 pp., $24.95)

Much of the theater of the Reagan years came from Reagan's speeches. Blessed with gifted writers, he delivered his addresses with both sincerity and skill. A typical Reagan speech is a compound of humor, nostalgia, and understated indignation about irresponsible government.

Some of his best are collected in *Speaking My Mind*, from his famous 1964 TV speech for Barry Goldwater to his farewell address. The themes of the political ones are predictable: we need less government, lower taxes, more defenses. Others are more personal—a eulogy for his old friend Robert Taylor, a reminiscence of his days as a baseball announcer.

Even in print, and in words largely composed by others, Reagan's personality seems warmly present. He created a persona so well-defined that a good

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speechwriter could recreate it: your friendly neighbor (who just happens to be your President, trying to do what you'd like to do if you were in his shoes). It was the most successful long-running act in American political history.

Its key element is steadiness, not subtlety. Reagan long ago learned to hit and hold a certain note, the middle C of American patriotic sentiment. It hardly needs saying that his subdued histrionics have worn extremely well, expressing a common denominator, a mildly exasperated conservatism, that has rarely failed to resonate with a large public. "We"—we normal Americans, minding our own business—are always pitted against "government." This government, oddly, is never "our" government when it's bad; it's just "government," and "we" have to defend ourselves against it.

From this base of familiar sentiment, Reagan deploys his rhetorical weaponry: anecdotes, both shocking and funny; can-you-believe-it statistics; what-I've-learned-in-this-job personal experiences; climaxes of gentle mockery.

> For three decades we have sought to solve the problems of unemployment through government planning, and the more the plans fail, the more the planners plan. The latest is the Area Redevelopment Agency. They have just declared Rice County, Kansas, a depressed area. Rice County, Kansas, has two hundred oil wells, and the 14,000 people there have over $30 million on deposit in personal savings in their banks. When the government tells you you are depressed, lie down and be depressed!

That's Ronald Reagan talking in 1964, in the same voice speechwriters would be simulating in 1989—not an inimitable voice, but a supremely imitable one. Now and then I've caught myself using it too.

Could that voice emit liberalism? Could it be itself if it were summoning up emotion on behalf of providing homeless shelters, raising taxes, coming to terms with the Sandinistas? Or would it be hopelessly miscast in any role but a conservative one?

I don't really know. But I suspect that Ronald Reagan knows his strength lies not only in his sincerity, but in a cunning that's inseparable from it. He typically understates: he knowingly appeals to a fund of sentiment in the public that is already

Tim Bower

there, waiting to be evoked. He's not one to lead the troops at Agincourt with a fiery speech. Anything that takes much more than a nudge is not his style.

Collectivism always involves mobilizing masses, creating a sense of crisis. It doesn't usually sit well with a reassuring manner; though Franklin Roosevelt managed to make socialism sound soothing, he had the advantage of a populace that was already in panic. Reagan found conservatism itself in an edgy mood, and restored its natural languor. He brought out the conservatism of people who had no particular interest in what are called right-wing politics. But his gift probably couldn't be transferred to any other cause.

Ronald Reagan's speaking style is as ethnically specific as Jackie Mason's; just as limited, and just as capable of a few great effects. Listening to him speak is a bit like watching the world's greatest B movie: he can be corny and overpowering at the same time.

But B movies can only succeed by enlisting tried-and-true sentiments, the kind toward which liberalism has become adversarial. A Ronald Reagan pleading for abortion on demand is inconceivable. You can't play that theme in C major. It's not already *there*, in "the American people," who, for Reagan, are always distinct from "government."

Those who called Reagan an "ideologue," with a "Manichean" view of reality, couldn't be more mistaken. An ideologue is someone whose commitment to principle cuts him off from human feeling, from solidarity with the people around him. Reagan's whole success as a politician is due to his matchless ability to reach a certain level of popular sentiment to which liberalism has no access.

He has his blind spots, and his idea of "the American people" can be criticized as narrow and old-fashioned, too rooted in the Midwest he knew as a boy. After all, he wasn't elected unanimously. But the America he loves isn't quite extinct, either. Enough of it survived to give him two landslides and to keep him immensely popular after eight years in the White House; and to elect a successor who, during the campaign, talked like Reagan.

Now he's gone, and "government" is still with us: special-interest Democrats, and clubhouse Republicans cutting deals with them. Any Republicans who still aspire to something more than minority status in a permanently defensive posture should study the speeches in this book, and learn how the master did it. □

Our Greatest Architect

JEFFREY HART

THE SCANDAL distracts us from the enduring truth. As the clock inched toward midnight on June 25, 1906, Stanford White sat at a table in the roof café of the old Madison Square Garden. He had designed the building himself. It was not then the scene of hockey matches or basketball games, but an elaborate and sophisticated pleasure dome. The first bullet hit White in the left eye and killed him instantly, but Harry K. Thaw fired two more shots just to be sure.

Thaw was a millionaire Pittsburgh playboy and a mentally unstable narcotics addict. His murderous obses-

Stanny: The Gilded Life of Stanford White, by Paul R. Baker (Free Press, 554 pp., $24.95)

sion with White derived from the fact that years earlier White had de-

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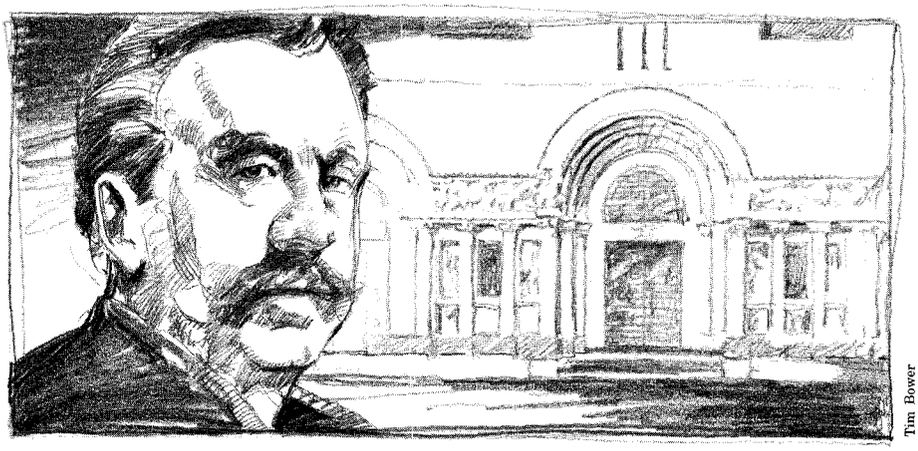
flowered (raped, in effect) the beautiful actress Evelyn Nesbit. Somehow, Thaw had persuaded Miss Nesbit to marry him, and she had incautiously told him about White's deed.

At the time of the rape, Evelyn Nesbit, age 16, was a star in the popular musical *Floradora*, known as "the girl in the green velvet swing." Stanford White wined and dined her, swung her around Manhattan in horse carriages, and introduced her to high society. He took her to various of his "hideaways" for intimate suppers. Eventually, he struck. After plying her with champagne, he took her to a bedroom, complete with mirrors and flashing lights, and dressed her in a Japanese kimono. Then she passed



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out. When she awoke, she was no longer a virgin—but she was for the time being in love with White, who liked to swing her on a velvet swing in the nude.

White had a wife out in Smithtown, Long Island, whom he visited on weekends and seems to have regarded with great affection. Her attitude toward the activities reported in the gossip columns remains unknown. In any case, Smithtown was not the scene of the real action. White and his social and artistic intimates maintained various dens in Manhattan which were used for anonymous sexual parties. One was called the Sewer Club, another the Morgue. White also had a cozy apartment in the tower above Madison Square Garden. When he was murdered, a tenor on the roof café stage was singing "I Could Love a Thousand Girls." Among White's effects were 160 books of erotica, and he shared with Thaw an interest in sado-masochism. On the night he died, he was wearing a ring "of peculiar design," with figures of two nude women and one male. Stanford White made Hugh Hefner look like a choirboy.

But, interesting as it is, this side of White distracts us from the fact that he may be the very greatest of American architects. Stanford White was a Renaissance man in several senses of the word. He designed many great buildings of the turn-of-the-century period, and he not only designed the buildings but ransacked Europe to decorate them.

White's father was an impecunious litterateur and Shakespeare specialist whose conversation must have been White's principal education. At 16, White was apprenticed to the firm of the great Henry Hobson Richardson, who immediately recognized the boy's skill at freehand drawing. Before he was twenty, White was given extraordinary responsibilities by Richardson, supervising ongoing architectural projects. Soon came the great years with the firm of McKim, Mead, and White, without doubt the dominant architectural firm in the country. White was the firm's resident genius. He reacted against Richardson's romanesque experiments and against the Gothic Revival, deciding instead to produce a magnificent American classicism. "For White," observes Paul Baker in this riveting biography, "during the last decades of the nineteenth century the formally balanced classical tradition . . . became ever more important. . . . As the United States grew in wealth and national strength and became with the Spanish–American War a world imperial power, adaptation of the traditional modes of the grand and imperial design seemed to him particularly fitting."

You cannot stroll around Manhattan without becoming sharply aware of his creativity. The Villard Houses, on Madison Avenue, now part of the Helmsley Palace Hotel, derive from Renaissance models. White designed the magnificent façade of St. Bartholomew's Church on Park Avenue, and great private homes arose under his architectural magic wand. McKim, Mead, and White designed Columbia University's Low Library, and much else on that campus. Augustus Saint-Gaudens and White collaborated on a statue of Admiral Farragut, which can be seen on lower Fifth Avenue —and also on what may be the single best piece of American sculpture, the memorial to Henry Adams's wife, Clover, in Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, D.C. It is a strange and brooding female figure, faceless, metaphysically disturbing.

White also designed the Newport Casino, and herewith a charming tale. James Gordon Bennett, the multimillionaire publisher of the *New York Herald*, had sponsored as his guest at another Newport club one Captain Henry Candy, a British polo player. When Candy rode his horse up the stairs and into the main hall, the club withdrew his privileges. Outraged, Bennett commissioned White to design a better club nearby; he produced the Casino.

Aesthetically, we are now beginning to recognize the achievements of what Mark Twain denigrated as the Gilded Age. Here, surely, is an aesthetic that does not posit that less is more. The glass designs of White's friend Louis Comfort Tiffany have recently had a triumphant exhibit at the Renwick Gallery in Washington. These days, a hundred thousand dollars *might* buy you a good Tiffany lamp.

In architectural reaction to the imperial ornateness of White's era, we have had the severe glass boxes of modern urban business architecture, derivative of the *Bauhaus*. This style is theoretically exhausted, and even its former practitioner, the architect Philip Johnson, has launched a rather timid attack upon it. You can bet, however, that one hundred years from now the only two steel-and-glass structures still standing on Park Avenue will be Lever House and Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building, despite his out-of-scale fountains. The rest will have gone the way of Nineveh and Tyre. But Stanford White's designs will live in the history of art. He was the noblest Roman of them all, and he probably did love a thousand girls. □

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The Shock of the New

JAMES GARDNER

On November 3, in the auditorium of London's Victoria and Albert Museum, the most eminent architects and builders of the realm met in an extraordinary synod to debate what ought to be done about, and indeed to, that royal nuisance, the Prince of Wales. By the time it was all over, at least one person had gone on record comparing Prince Charles to the Nazis.

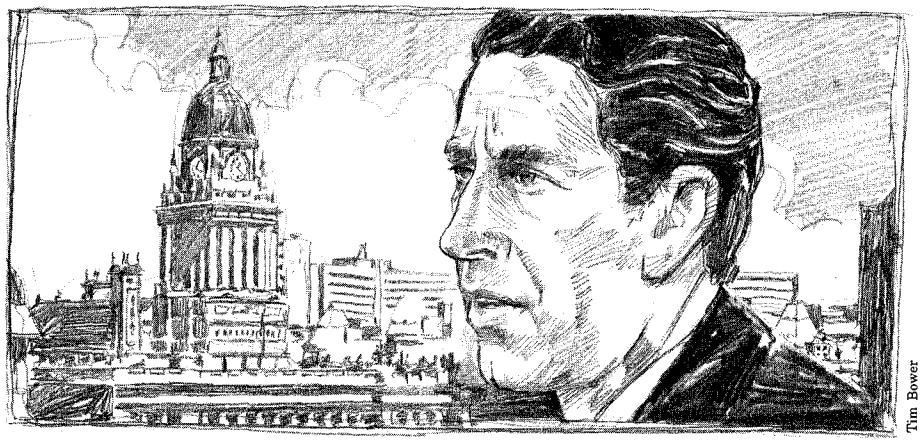
A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture, by HRH The Prince of Wales (Doubleday, 160 pp., $40)

What could the Prince have done to deserve such contumely? For the past four years, he has freely expressed grave misgivings, if not downright contempt, for modernist architecture, which, he contends, has all but destroyed the beauty of London and much of rural Britain. What galls architects is not simply such things as his reference to the National Gallery's proposed new wing as "a monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much-loved and elegant friend," or his deriding another illustrious project for looking "like a 1930s wireless." Rather it is the unassailable fact that his quarrel with modernism has struck a raw nerve; that, at a grass-roots level, Charles's proposed reforms have won massive support. A documentary on the BBC, in which he aired his views, was wildly successful, while his recent exhibition at the Victoria and Albert was never less than packed to capacity. Meanwhile, his new architectural treatise, *A Vision of Britain*, was an instant best-seller, and has been avidly debated.

The fact that *A Vision of Britain* is now on sale in American bookstores is unlikely to send our citizens into a buying frenzy. Nevertheless the book does make a legitimate claim upon our attention. Recent controversies over the renovation of Times Square in New York, and the newly planned public library in Chicago, have not only raised our general awareness of architectural issues, but have also forced us to engage some of the challenging questions that the Prince of Wales has posed about contemporary British practice.

England was surely the first nation to enter the nineteenth century, and it has been, I submit, the last to leave it. A nation as wealthy as England, a nation too proud to be seen lagging behind fashion, has not wanted for modernists in all the provinces of its art. And yet modernism has always been viewed with suspicion as an imported intrusion upon the placid continuity of Englishness. It has never secured in England the enthusiastic following, in architecture or in anything else, that it has won in France, Germany, and America. With his fresh, earnest, and eloquent voice, the Prince of Wales has merely given greater respectability to this deeply rooted attitude. His message is simple: he inveighs against "the wanton destruction that has taken place in this country in the name of progress; the sheer, unadulterated ugliness and mediocrity of public and commercial buildings, and of housing estates, not to mention the dreariness and heartlessness of much urban planning. . . . The past, apparently, is largely irrelevant in this scheme of things, and its meaning and lessons [must] be destroyed."

If Prince Charles were wrong about everything else, if all his reasoning and all his theories were awry, the thrust of his argument would still conquer anyone who disinterestedly surveyed the London skyline. In one brilliant rhetorical stroke, Charles has included a reproduction of London's skyline as it appeared in a photographically accurate painting by the great eighteenth-century Venetian artist Antonio Canaletto; over this, on translucent tracing paper, is superimposed a view of the same prospect as it appears today. Instead of the inspiring profusion of steeples gathered within the paternal orbit of St. Paul's, we see that massive structure itself all but smothered under a chaotic welter of denuded gridworks, as inharmonious within themselves as they are incompatible with any form, living or inanimate, that they stand next to. English modernists are just not good enough at the international style, the style that defines the glass boxes of Manhattan. Furthermore, they have a perverse love of molding buildings out of a glutinous yellowish concrete which almost instantly becomes caked in grime and exhaust fumes, and which, under the often overcast skies of that part of the world, rises out of the burdened earth like a new Wailing Wall. To see this infernal legacy is to recall that line of Shelley's: "Hell is a city much like London!"



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But what would be the result if Prince Charles's recommendations were followed? To judge from the buildings he mentions favorably in *A Vision of Britain*—like Evans and Shalev's law courts in Truro, or Jim Whale's arcade at Craven Court—the return to tradition that he proposes would surely be an improvement upon the ravages of modernist architecture in Britain. Furthermore, there is something typically British in the re-enactment of earlier styles. As early as the late 1600s Hawksmoor and Vanbrugh were jazzing up their classical structures with allusions to medieval fortresses. From the Palladians early in the eighteenth century, through the neoclassicists and the Gothic Revivalists,

Mr. Gardner writes about art for NR, Commentary, *and* Seven Days.

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down to the Beaux Arts pasticheur Bloomfield and the Craftsman Luytens, English architecture has been defined by a studious if uninspired imitation of earlier styles. With the exception of Hawksmoor and Vanbrugh, who were geniuses, no truly great architect has emerged on the English scene, and one is inclined to believe that none ever will. The Prince's architecture may be pleasing; it most certainly will be an improvement on what is there now. But it is content with an archaeologist's knowledge of earlier practice, rather than an artist's intuitive comprehension of an earlier process. It is categorically second best.

There is a peculiar political dimension to all of this. Occasionally, in the course of his discussion, the Prince will, innocently enough, use the word "code." This is highly interesting, because that word has entered the language of art through the language of deconstructionism—a philosophy of distinctly radical proclivities. In this connection it reflects the influence of one of Charles's principal advisors in architectural matters, Leon Krier, a rabid post-modernist bent on bulldozing away the modernist heritage and erecting in its place entire cities according to his own nebulously stated conceptions of beauty. In England modernism is still seen as a risky and radical commodity, which is why many on the Left continue to embrace it, and why many on the Right, in their fervent wish to be pre-modern, end up by being post-modern (notwithstanding Charles's rejection of this term).

Among American critics, on the other hand, conservatism is leagued with modernism, defending formal integrity against the meretricious intrusions of ornament and extra-architectural considerations. In America, however, you would never find a debate like the one at the Victoria and Albert last month. On this side of the Atlantic most architects defected long ago from mainstream modernism, and now embrace post-modernism in varying degrees. This transition has been viewed with dismay by the American cultural Right. It has been seen as, and indeed it is, an apostasy from the pursuit of the purer beauties of architecture.

But the cultural Right's anathematizing of all, or almost all, architects who do not toe the modernist line is probably the weakest link in its armor. The cultural Right has refused intransigently to acknowledge that, despite certain monuments of surpassing beauty, the modernist idiom has proved inadequate to the needs of living, breathing, aspiring humanity. The originators of the style hoped to evolve an idiom so timeless that it could never grow old. In fact, it has aged much faster than anyone could have foreseen: much faster, as it has turned out, than pre-modern buildings, since there is no place in such structures for age, and time, whose sea-changes beautify so many of man's artifacts, can only ravage a modern building. As filth darkens each nook and cranny, as the structure starts to creak, the modernist dream of immaculate pristineness seems hollow indeed. All of those buildings, all of those proud towers, are slated for destruction. So cheaply are most of them made, and so tenuous are their structural principles, that few will survive more than two or three generations. By then, if they have not been pulled down, they will come down of their own weakness. The older buildings will remain standing. In the meantime, communications and a changing world may very well abolish those conditions that necessitated the dense concentration of people into high-rises. The twenty-first century will probably look more like the nineteenth century than like the twentieth. □

Fighter and Artist

SELDEN RODMAN

Thomas Hart Benton: An American Original, by Henry Adams (Knopf, 360 pp., $60)

WHEN, IN THE always political 1930s, I visited Thomas Hart Benton in Martha's Vineyard, we seldom talked about politics. Instead, we talked about art—incessantly. It seemed to me that Tom had everything an artist could want: a beautiful, loving wife, and a perky son; enough fame to make a very good living (*Time* had done a cover story in December of 1934), but not enough to unbalance him; good friends with whom to exchange bawdy stories, but who were not overly impressed with his illustrious background and enormous talent. He organized a band, himself on harmonica playing Bach or "Buffalo Gals," backed up mainly by his pupils; pupils such as the Pollock brothers, Charles and Jackson. He loved to laugh, especially at himself, although he would bristle if he was laughed at: his diminutive (five foot three) stature, his notorious combativeness, or his paintings.

The painting was always a problem. Could it be taken seriously when so many people liked it, and the "wrong" critics praised it? I could remind him, as I did, that great artists such as Raphael, Titian, and Rubens were popular in their lifetimes without making waves, but Tom knew, and I knew he knew, that I admired the wave-makers more—Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and Goya—and I suspect he did too.

On the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his birth, marked by the publication of Henry Adams's major biography, the airing of a PBS documentary, and the opening of a retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York, it would seem appropriate to recall the man and his career.

Benton was a political animal almost from birth. It could hardly have been otherwise. His father was a Missouri congressman for thirty years, and his great-uncle was the senator who nearly killed Andrew Jackson in a duel, and was described by his biographer, Theodore Roosevelt, as having "the tenacity of a snapping turtle." It is hardly surprising that Tom's father, who was a bull on the hustings, encouraged his son early on to use his fists.

At home, his father was almost tongue-tied by his wife's social graces and sex-shy beauty (in Washington they were known as "Beauty and the Beast"), and she was permitted to

Mr. Rodman is the author of several books of poetry and art criticism, most recently Where Art Is Joy: Forty Years of Haitian Popular Art.

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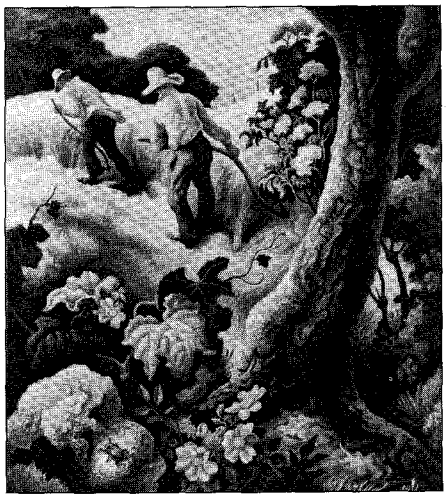
encourage Tom's artistic ambitions. She treasured the remarkable drawings her son was making by the age of six, and protected him from the prevalent notion that an artist was a sissy. She need not have bothered; Tom was quite capable of protecting himself.

Back home in Missouri, he sharpened his skills as cartoonist for the local paper. He drank in the local saloon, where he was accepted, as he said later, in as short a time as it took to knock an art critic to the floor. He attended the Chicago Art Institute, where he drew the attention of his teachers, both their artistic praise, which he accepted, and their homosexual advances, which he repelled. He began to create the cartoon-like art, aggressively masculine, that, in mural after mural, he would paint until the end of his life.

But do not dismiss Benton as a regionalist booster of Americanism. Look at the watercolors and oils he painted in Paris (1908-10), particularly *The Chestnut Tree*, which would hold its own in any exhibit of Pissarro or Seurat, or his later painting of Central Park (beautifully reproduced in this book), which stands up with the best of Winslow Homer. His portraits from the same period rival Eakins and Wyeth, and even Clement Greenberg and Hilton Kramer, Abstract Expressionism's high priests, stood in awe of these pictures.

His time in Paris was the unhappiest of his career. He was in despair over his work, lacking an audience, and temporarily bereft of the knack for making art a performance. He was unhappy with his mistress but humiliated when his mother arrived, paid her off for $300, and bundled him back to Missouri. It was fortunate for him that she did, though, for back home he rediscovered his talent, and then in New York he found his medium. He worked on movie sets and learned how to paint "big." He made friends with Lewis Mumford and Thomas Craven at *The Dial* and became the enemy of Stuart Davis, and he learned the skills of debate (he still considered himself a Marxist) that would later serve him against more formidable adversaries. But marrying the beautiful, indomitably spirited Italian immigrant Rita Piacenza, in defiance of his parents' outrage—that was his greatest exploit. It was a union



The Metropolitan Museum of Art/George A. Hearn Fund

Detail from "July Hay," by Thomas Hart Benton (1943).

that would sustain him for the rest of his life.

The story of their marriage is the least satisfactory part of this book—perhaps inevitably, since Rita wrote no letters, and Tom's (at least those I have) deal only with political and aesthetic matters. She never wavered in her support of him, even when he disappeared without notice on sketching trips, one of which lasted a month, during which time she was broke and stranded at the Vineyard with their son. She complained only once. "He's the worst husband and worst father," she told a local journalist. "No American woman could have been married to Tom. You have to leave him alone, and let him come and go as he pleases." Tom's only recorded comment was: "The bonds of marriage do not lie very heavily on my back." Many people wondered why Rita put up with it. "My husband," she replied, "is a genius." In his 1922 *Self-Portrait with Rita*—the cover illustration of this book—Benton presents himself at the ocean, stripped to the waist, arrogantly handsome and muscular, towering over landscape, bathers, and Rita like a god.

Henry Adams is best in his analysis of the revolution in mural painting Benton achieved beginning with his 1930 *America Today* at the New School in Manhattan. Benton completed his cycle (he shared the work with José Clemente Orozco) in a record nine months. Each athletic episode flows into the next, separated only by jagged silver moldings that resemble bolts of lightning. The result displayed an energy never before seen

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RIGHT BOOKS

■ The West doesn't deserve to be winning World War III, and strictly speaking it isn't—the other side is losing. In *The KGB against the Main Enemy: How the Soviet Intelligence Service Operates against the United States* (Lexington Books, 384 pp., $19.95), Herbert Romerstein and Stanislav Levchenko illustrate the proposition. Theirs is an eye-opening history of Soviet spying and "active measures" in the U.S. since 1920.

An open society is, by definition, more vulnerable than a closed society to hostile secret activities. It doesn't follow, however, that the U.S. must handicap itself in the secret war; yet America *is* handicapped, if not paralyzed. An example: in 1981, a GRU (military intelligence) officer called at the office of a Republican congressman and asked for a copy of a plan for basing MX missiles. Sensibly, an aide refused the request and called the FBI. "These agents," said the aide, "operate with impunity on Capitol Hill." Of course, the CIA enjoys no reciprocal rights in the Kremlin, and although the U.S. has enforced travel restrictions on most Soviet diplomatic personnel—to match those imposed upon American embassy officials in Moscow—no such checks apply to Soviets at the UN. Fair enough, one might say, except that both Capitol Hill *and* the UN are off limits to the FBI.

The congressional talent for self-inflicted wounds reached its zenith with the passage of the Privacy and the Freedom of Information Acts, which deprived the FBI of 90 per cent of its sources. At the same time, congressional surveillance was gravely hampering the CIA. The nadir came during the Carter Administration, when CIA Director Stansfield Turner fired several hundred Soviet specialists, and switched the intelligence effort from HUMINT (spies: bad) to SIGINT (signals and technology: good). It takes years to train a spy; only minutes to fire one.

To say the authors are highly qualified is an understatement. Levchenko (a former KGB major) was deeply involved in active measures in Japan before defecting ten years ago. Romerstein was Director of the Office to Counter Soviet Active Measures at the U.S. Information Agency, and the very fact that USIA had such an office is a credit to the more realistic Reagan approach. The President's decision, in June 1985, to balance diplomatic representation in Washington and Moscow was a massive counterblow, as was the expulsion some months later of 105 spies from the Soviet mission at the UN. But as CIA Director William Webster has publicly acknowledged, Soviet espionage has grown dramatically even as the charismatic Gorbachev has proffered the seductions of *glasnost*.

While Western governments may admit the threat of espionage—not only by the KGB and GRU, but also by the various satellite intelligence services under Soviet control—they find it harder to reach a consensus about active measures, which may include the dissemination of forgeries and other disinformation, and the use of agents of influence. When no money changes hands, it is difficult to ban our citizens from acting as agents of influence. As a French intelligence officer told me: "If we did . . . we'd have to lock up the entire staff of *L'Humanité*." An agent of influence, witting or not, can always argue that he agrees with Soviet policy objectives; peace, for example. The authors give the example of the manipulation, by five members of the Communist Party, of a New York peace-march steering committee in 1982. As for forgeries, Romerstein himself was a victim of one: a letter on USIA stationery, allegedly signed by him, that was distributed to various American publications. The KGB has even forged letters "signed" by such notables as Caspar Weinberger and Ronald Reagan.

Recently, KGB head Vladimir Kryuchkov actually called a Moscow press conference to demonstrate what good guys he and his spies have become, and Gorbachev, himself a former KGB informer, must agree: in the latest reshuffling, he brought Kryuchkov into the Politburo.

—Brian Crozier

■ All books struggle to be born; a few refuse to die. Richard Weaver's *The Southern Tradition at Bay: A History of Postbellum Thought* first appeared in 1968, although the core of the work, in the form of an unpublished dissertation, had been attracting a scholarly audience since 1943. A manuscript version of the book was rejected by a university press, and remained unpublished for twenty years. Regnery Gateway has just reissued the book (400 pp., $21.95) after a decade out of print. Its return is welcome, especially to a Buckeye like me, who grew up never hearing a good word spoken about the Old South, which was, in Weaver's words, "right without realizing the grounds of its rightness." That statement was written with authority, yet it embraces the author's recognition of paradox.

Reviewing the first edition for *NR*, Jeffrey Hart wrote: "The contradictions encountered in experience generate ideas, and without contradictions, without *problems*, it would be difficult to imagine how there could be any ideas at all."

For many Northerners, the contradictions of Southern history are too many, too damning, and Weaver's treatment of the South's "peculiar institution" may leave many conservative Yankees (and not a few Confederates) uneasy. Weaver is hardly pro-slavery; he simply gives antebellum attitudes their due—no revisionist historiography here. But if the view of blacks in *The Southern Tradition at Bay*, which is hard to pin down (and is, perhaps, irrelevant), can seem at times, well . . . perverse, it is because the modern ear is unused to the sound of the South's true voices. When Weaver writes about a "Negro character," he is not speaking as an anthropologist, psychologist, or geneticist, but as an historian concerned with the reality of postbellum perceptions—black and white—not with our currently inflamed sensitivities.

Weaver believed that the Old South was "the last non-materialist civilization in the Western World"; that its *rightness* was worth defending, and remains our bulwark against scientific modernism and the untempered state. Even in the shadow of slavery, it indeed may well have been "a hall hung with splendid tapestries in which no one would care to live; but from them we can learn something of how to live." —Brad Miner

in American art—or in mural art anywhere.

"Tabloid art!" "Cheap nationalism!" "Modern effrontery!" were but a few of the brickbats that rained down from the Left and the Right, once the initial wave of popular enthusiasm subsided. Benton was used to that by now, and aggressively counterpunched. The envious Communist badmouth Stuart Davis was reduced to temporary insensibility. And Benton now had a champion in Thomas Craven. Unfortunately, that turned out to be a long-term liability. Craven's philistinism and anti-Semitism, which were linked to his anti-intellectual bumptiousness and contempt for "pansy"

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art dealers, provided an easy target for the snipers of French-oriented modernism. As a result, the better Benton's murals became, the less seriously they were taken.

Adams also describes well the complex relationship between Benton's subsequent style and that of his most celebrated pupil, Jackson Pollock. But I can't agree with Adams that there was a rivalry between them. I knew both of them well, and I can say that there was admiration on both sides —not that Tom wasn't initially, and privately, irked by the younger artist's explosive fame. And Jack Pollock did boast, also privately and early after their break, that his master had "come face to face with Michelangelo, and lost," but Benton remained Pollock's substitute father. (Jack adored Rita.) Pollock learned the expressive power of sheer size from Benton, and, through Benton's genius, he found the inner rhythms of disparate compositional objects. Benton himself said it best: "The Pollock structures defy the 'rules of art,' but they do correspond to the actual mechanics of human vision, which is also without closed peripheries. Jack Pollock's work represents not the objects we experience in the act of seeing, but the *way* we see them, in continuing, unending shifts of focus."

The blatant eroticism of late Benton works such as *Susanna and the Elders* (1938) and *Persephone* (1939) offended some critics and many women, perhaps in the one case because pubic hair was depicted for the first time, or, in the other, because the paintings superficially recalled calendar art. In fact, Benton had achieved another breakthrough. *Persephone* especially left behind the cartoon-like satiric qualities of the earlier murals. The palette is expressive, vibrant, and the emotional content is powerful and very personal. (Benton's original title was *The Rape of Persephone*, and clearly revealed a childhood memory of his brutish father assaulting his unwilling mother. It was Benton's own son who recognized his grandfather in the hillbilly Peeping Tom.)

Henry Adams thinks Tom Benton may have been too much of an oddball to be neatly characterized as a "modernist."

[Benton] believed that modern subject matter would give rise to modern forms, and in fact his synthesis of Cubist painting, the movies, and American life created exactly that. He gave birth to a new mode of composition, which proved America's most influential contribution to pictorial form. □

Mozart Militant

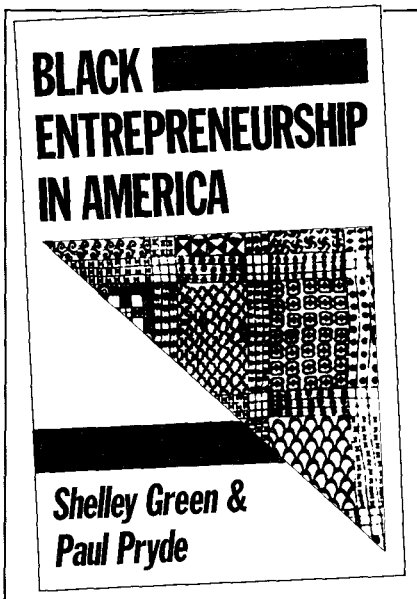
GEORGE JOCHNOWITZ

MUSIC is the least referential and, therefore, the least political of the arts. Mozart, one of history's greatest composers, has rarely if ever been considered a political thinker. More often he is described as a man who, although a musical genius, was not otherwise especially bright, had a troubled marriage, lived in poverty, and spoke with obscenities. Volkmar Braunbehrens does not dispute Mozart's scatology; indeed, he quotes samples from Mozart's letters. But aside from this, Braunbehrens has written a revisionist biography in which Mozart is interested in the political issues of his day, happily married to a capable woman, and even financially successful.

Mozart in Vienna, 1781–1791, by Volkmar Braunbehrens (Grove, 420 pp., $25)

Mozart was not bound by the usual prejudices of his day. (Empress Maria Theresa, who died in 1780, the year before Mozart moved to Vienna, "even went so far as to have a screen placed between herself and her [Jewish] visitors so she would not have to look at them.") Among Mozart's friends, neighbors, and associates were a surprising number of Jews and converts from Judaism to Catholicism. Lorenzo Da Ponte, who was born a Jew and was for a time a Catholic priest, wrote the librettos for three of Mozart's operas: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così Fan Tutte*.

Music may be quite apolitical, but opera, which combines music with the-



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Shelley Green and Paul Pryde

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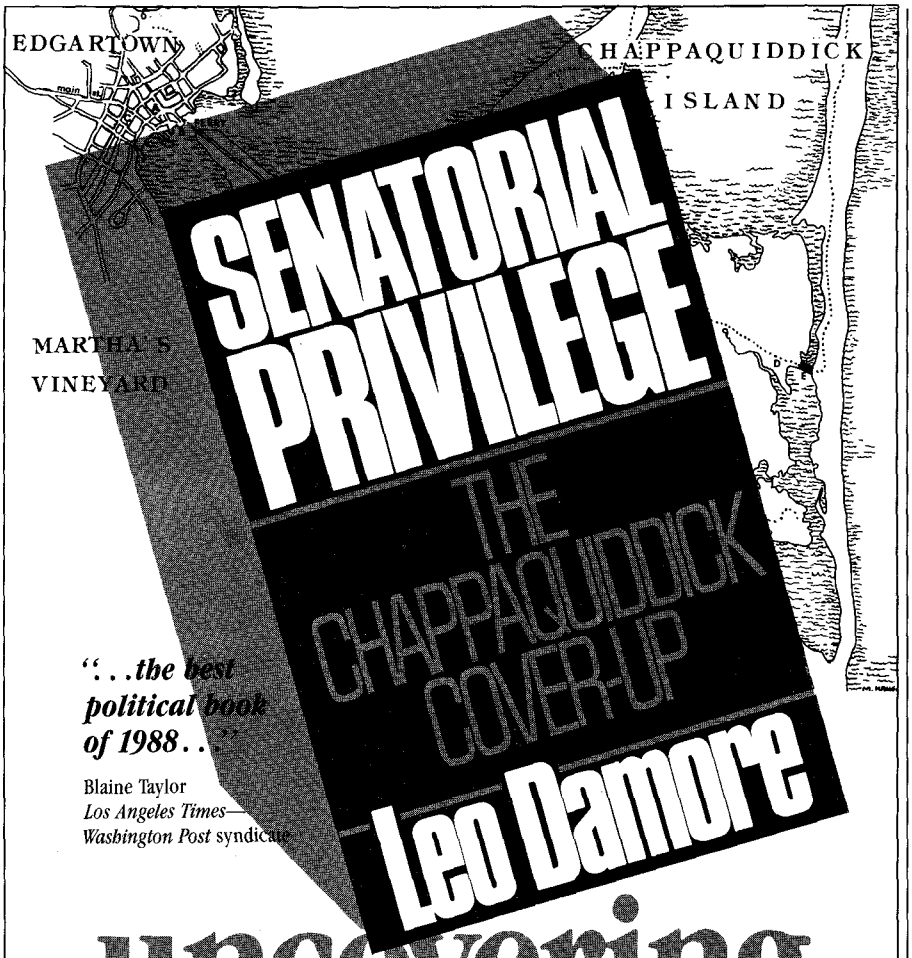

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ater, can easily provide a forum for the expression of a composer's views. Mozart was a Freemason, even after Emperor Joseph II proclaimed the Freemasonry Act of 1785. (Braunbehrens writes: "Mozart's loyalty at a time when most members were fleeing the order testifies to his unshakable optimism and his devotion to the work of the lodge.") So was Emanuel Schikaneder, librettist for *The Magic Flute*, an opera whose plot includes references to Masonic ritual and belief. Braunbehrens's discussion of possible meanings of this opera is one of the most thought-provoking sections of the book. The "Temple of Wisdom," which may represent Masonic ideals,

Lisa Haney

is ruled by Sarastro, who is viewed by his subjects (and generally by the audience as well) as the embodiment of Good. Braunbehrens views Sarastro as an ambiguous rather than a good character. (I would describe him as totally evil.) Braunbehrens suggests that Mozart and Schikaneder may have written "a private memorandum to Freemasons," urging them to fight their own authoritarianism. Without disagreeing, I would offer another interpretation: Sarastro may also represent Joseph II, the enlightened despot whose rule coincided with Mozart's years in Vienna.

In *The Marriage of Figaro*, based on a play that was banned in Paris, "bourgeois sensibilities and moral ideals were compared favorably with aristocratic frivolity and misuse of power," Braunbehrens writes. In *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, the

Mr. Jochnowitz is a professor of linguistics at the College of Staten Island, CUNY.

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character Blonde calls herself "an Englishwoman, born to freedom," reflecting Mozart's description of himself as an "arch-Englishman." But is there any political message in *Così Fan Tutte*? It is the story of two men, engaged to two sisters. Each man, honoring a bet, tries to win the heart of the other's fiancée. Braunbehrens recognizes that the opera is too good—the characters too real, the music too moving—for such a silly plot. "*Così Fan Tutte* insistently portrays the ambivalence of human emotions at the risk of being amoral." Like all of Mozart's operas, he writes, it questions "unwritten aesthetic, social, and political laws." It does, perhaps more than Braunbehrens suggests, for the opera makes musical sense *only* if each woman falls in love with her sister's boyfriend. The sisters do not sing duets with their fiancés; when paired with the wrong men, they make beautiful music. In fact, Mozart himself first fell in love with one sister in the Weber family, Aloysia, but eventually married another, Constanze. *Così Fan Tutte* may be his most nearly autobiographical work.

Mozart in Vienna is a meandering but provocative and well-documented study. The author's revisionist theories never contradict the facts; they are not, however, the only views that can be drawn from the abundant but inconclusive data presented. And to the listener it doesn't altogether matter. The reality of musical experience exists in its own plane. Though tyrants may fear it, most music remains apolitical, and whether Figaro, the character, is a revolutionary or a wiseguy is of little importance; Mozart's music is what makes *Figaro*, the opera, great. □

DELECTATIONS

Christmas Giving

NIKA HAZELTON

THIS IS my annual plea for doing something for somebody else at Christmas. If we complain about the commercialization of the holiday, the best way to restore its true spirit is to really put ourselves out for other people—whether by giving to worthy charities, or visiting the old and sick, or signing up for volunteer work at a hospital.

The same principle applies to Christmas gifts for family and friends. Rather than giving objects that just clutter up your nearest and dearest's houses, why not give a gift of food—and best of all, something that you have baked yourself, such as cookies or a cake? The recipe that follows is a tried-and-true one; the cake tastes good and keeps well. The secret of moist, flavorful fruitcake is to let the fruit soak in the spirits for several days before putting them into the cake.

FRUITCAKE

1 pound glacé lemon peel
1 pound glacé orange peel
1 pound red and green glacé cherries
1 pound golden raisins
2 cups good-quality brandy or bourbon
2 cups dry white wine
6 cups flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground mace
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
1 pound butter, at room temperature
2 cups sugar
8 eggs, well beaten
1 tablespoon rose water (see note)
½ teaspoon almond extract

First prepare the glacé fruits. If they are very sugary, wash off the sugar under running cold water and dry the fruit well. Cut—do not grind or process—into very small dice, about ¼-inch cubes. (Cut fruit looks and tastes better than ground or chopped fruit.) Put glacé fruits and raisins into a deep bowl and mix well, using your hands. Combine the wine and brandy or bourbon, pour it over the fruit, and let stand, covered, at room temperature for at least 3 days. Stir twice daily.

On baking day, prepare the pans first. You will need four 8½″ × 4½″ × 2½″ loaf pans. Using unglazed brown paper (such as paper bags), cut four pieces the size of the pans' bottoms, plus strips to fit the sides of the pans—16 strips in all. Generously butter or grease the bottoms and sides of the pans. Line with the brown-paper pieces and grease the paper. Turn oven to slow (300° F.).

Sift together the flour, baking powder, and spices. In a bowl large enough to hold all the ingredients, cream the butter with an electric beater until very soft. Beat in the sugar, ¼ cup at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the eggs (2 at a time), rose water, and almond extract. Beat well to mix. Gradually beat in the flour mixture and stir until thoroughly blended. Add the prepared fruit and its liquid, and mix again thoroughly. It is easiest to do this with (clean) hands. Spoon the batter evenly into the pans, filling them no more than three-quarters full.

Place a shallow baking pan containing about 2 inches of water on the oven bottom. Place the cake pans on the middle rack. Bake about 2¾ hours. Remove the pan containing the water during the last 30 minutes of baking. Test the cakes with skewers; they should be done but not overbaked. Cool the cakes in their pans for 3 or 4 minutes. Then turn them out on the cake racks. Cool completely. When they are completely cooled but not before, peel off the bottom and side paper strips. Either wrap the cakes in clean kitchen towels wetted with brandy or bourbon, or dribble more liquor on the cakes and wrap them tightly in foil. Store in airtight containers for at least 2 weeks before cutting. The cakes can be kept this way for months but should be moistened with more liquor when they start looking dry—about once every 10 days at first and then at longer intervals. YIELD: About 10 pounds.

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NOTE: The cakes can be baked in other kinds of pans, but the pans must always be greased and lined with greased paper. Baking times will have to be adjusted according to the size of the pans used.

French rose water to be used in cooking can be bought in any good gourmet shop. There is also a rose water of Lebanese origin which can be had in Arab or other Middle Eastern shops, as well as in some gourmet shops, but it is not as good as the French. □

A WORD EDGEWISE

A Gift of Words

PETER LUBIN

YEARS AGO I dreamed of becoming immortal. So I went to Walton Crescent in Oxford, headquarters of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, to inquire how I might ensure that my coinages would find their way into future editions of the Bible of Words. I was crestfallen to discover that each word would have to appear in at least five publications, in works by various authors. My youthful dreams were dashed.

But I recovered, and would like to share two words I recently invented.

The first came to me as I read an article on the seeming inability of American students to learn foreign languages. American students of French rarely master the "intricacies of the parley-voo," the ones who study Italian may be at ease with the *cameriere* in a café but are usually at sea with Dante in the classroom, and the students who major in Russian may actually be able to read *Izvestia* —and even find it, as do its Soviet readers, "absorbent"—but are they likely to become privy to Pushkin's poetic technique? *Nyet*. Thirty words memorized for each class, the language labs, the videocassettes, and all the trips abroad are not substitutes for constant immersion in the language and culture of a foreign land. Unlike the Europeans, we cannot just hop over the border to polish our Polish, or hone our Hungarian.

So, Americans seldom become bilingual. Yet many can no longer be considered simply monolingual. What then shall we call those who have more than just a smattering of another language? I know. I ought to; I made up the word. Such students are *sesquilingual*, the noun being *sesquilinguist*, for "one who knows one and a half languages." No longer need one say sheepishly, "I know a little French." One can now proclaim, "I'm sesquilingual." It will be a useful word on résumés, as 1992 approaches. Although the Latin root ("*sesqui*") occurs in a number of chemical and musical terms (sesquisalt, sesquitertia), most of us have encountered it in only two words: *sesquipedalian* (literally, "one and a half feet"), a pejorative commonly used to describe polysyllabic words that we don't understand and the people who use them ("William F. Buckley, the sesquipedalian writer . . ."); and *sesquicentennial*, the 150th anniversary of a given event. What grand thing happened in 1839?

A second new word came to me when a friend in Cambridge, England, gave me his new telephone number: 51015. It occurred to me that we do not possess a word for the numerical equivalent of a palindrome, those words, phrases, and even whole sentences that are the same read backward as forward. Then, while leafing through a Spanish dictionary, I came across the word "*capicúa*," formed from the Latin *caput*, head, and the Spanish *cola*, tail, which is, indeed, a word meaning "a number that reads the same in either direction." Eureka! I have Americanized the word, shaving off its last syllable, and proudly present *capicue*, to be pronounced: kap-ee-kew.

Sesquilinguist and *capicue*, today making their first appearances in print, are yours to use to your mind's content. Happy holidays! And I'll be grateful if you do—just in case I decide to make another assault on Walton Crescent. Fair's fair, and if you should create a new word, and would like it to be used here, I will try to oblige. Perhaps then we can both enter, clapping and singing, the glorious kingdom of the OED. □

McSHERRY

(Continued from page 38)

proliferation of these parties that a joke current in Taipei has it that a flower pot falling from a roof garden has a one-in-four chance of hitting the president of a political party—39 at latest count.

But the fact of opposition parties is not the most important political occurrence in Taiwan today. The watershed is that, in the legislature, the men elected in 1947 are being asked—even vigorously urged—to retire.

Both the largest opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and the Young Turks of the KMT are eager to see the old legislators retire, opening up seats for themselves. The DPP members especially are hurling themselves into a campaign of persuasion of the old. They accost them on the floor of the legislature. They hand them printed invitations to resign. They present them with red roses—the token of farewell.

Since respect for elders is the cornerstone of Chinese culture, the DPP action does not sit well. Newspapers are shaking editorial heads. Ordinary citizens are tut-tutting. And the KMT, pursuing its parallel course but with greater discretion, can look more applaudably Chinese.

"It is not right to be harsh to these seniors," says Harvard-trained Dr. Ma Ying-jeou, one of the KMT's brightest and most attractive younger men. "It is hard for them to feel they are no longer wanted. They should retire, yes. They are all very old. Some are ill. Some cannot even come to the Legislative Yuan any more. But they must be allowed to retire with honor, with the nation's thanks." Some thirty have already done so.

But there are some old legislators who have no wish to retire. Their reluctance is not just an old man's clinging to position. It is a regard for what they hold as their historic mission. One octogenarian lashed out passionately: "You will destroy the Republic of China!" If there are only representatives from Taiwan in the legislature, how can they call it a national government?

It is a good question. It is also a question about which the government does not seem greatly concerned. With eyes officially on the Taiwan experience, there is little talk of the past.

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But some remember. "The good old days!" says former Premier Sun Yun-shung. "And they *were* good."

One morning, inside a Catholic church near the center of Taipei, many priests (Western and Chinese) and laymen (mostly Chinese) gathered for the funeral of one from those days, an 88-year-old Dutch priest. A missionary all his adult life, on the Mainland and in Taiwan, he had lived with and served China.

At the end of the service, the congregation sang, in Chinese, "Auld Lang Syne." It is as heart-wringing in Chinese as in English, and they sang with feeling. Outside, on the busy street where once bicyclists had pedaled past low, tiled-roofed shops, motor bikes roar, car horns honk. Through the open windows of the sweltering church sounds the pounding of air hammers, the buzz of saws—another skyscraper going up.

The congregation sang on. Whether they knew it or not, they were saying farewell to more than one good old man. The old Chinese ways were being swallowed up. "We must teach the Chinese culture in our schools," Dr. Mao Kao-wen, minister of education, says earnestly. "Family life is changing: mothers are working, fathers are too busy. The grandparents are living apart; they cannot train the children as they once did. It is up to the schools. We must keep life Chinese."

It is difficult, though. And Taiwan faces many problems. But—"Problems are *normal*!" At Taipei city offices, Thomas Huang beams. A former farm boy, now at fifty he is one of Taiwan's most able administrators and an unquenchable optimist. "Always there are problems. Do you know any country, any city that does not have problems? You do not throw up your hands. You *solve* them. We will solve ours. Bad air? Pollution control. More trees. Ivy planted on the buildings. Flower boxes. Get the private sector involved. Government cannot do everything. Traffic? More one-way streets. Parking towers. Mass transit. Then in eight years, maybe only six, when the subway is finished, traffic will be much better and—" he throws back his head and laughs—"and then we have new problems, eh? But that is not bad. That is reality." □

LETTERS

(Continued from page 6)

are unfair to whites, patronizing to blacks, and poison to society. Conservatives must not remain silent on this issue. Stuart Butler is badly mistaken when he says we should.

Richard F. Duncan
Professor of Law
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Neb.

I cannot fault Professor Duncan's legal logic, just as it is hard to fault many of the legal arguments once marshalled against the landmark civil-rights statutes. My argument is that black Americans ask an obvious question: Why are conservatives now so upset at unfairness to whites, whereas they were silent when it was directed against blacks?

Conservatives should *denounce egregious examples of discrimination against whites. But if that is their main focus, they can forget about attracting blacks to their banner. Conservatives will achieve credence among blacks only if they mount an equally aggressive effort to dismantle remaining legal barriers to black economic advancement.* —*SB*

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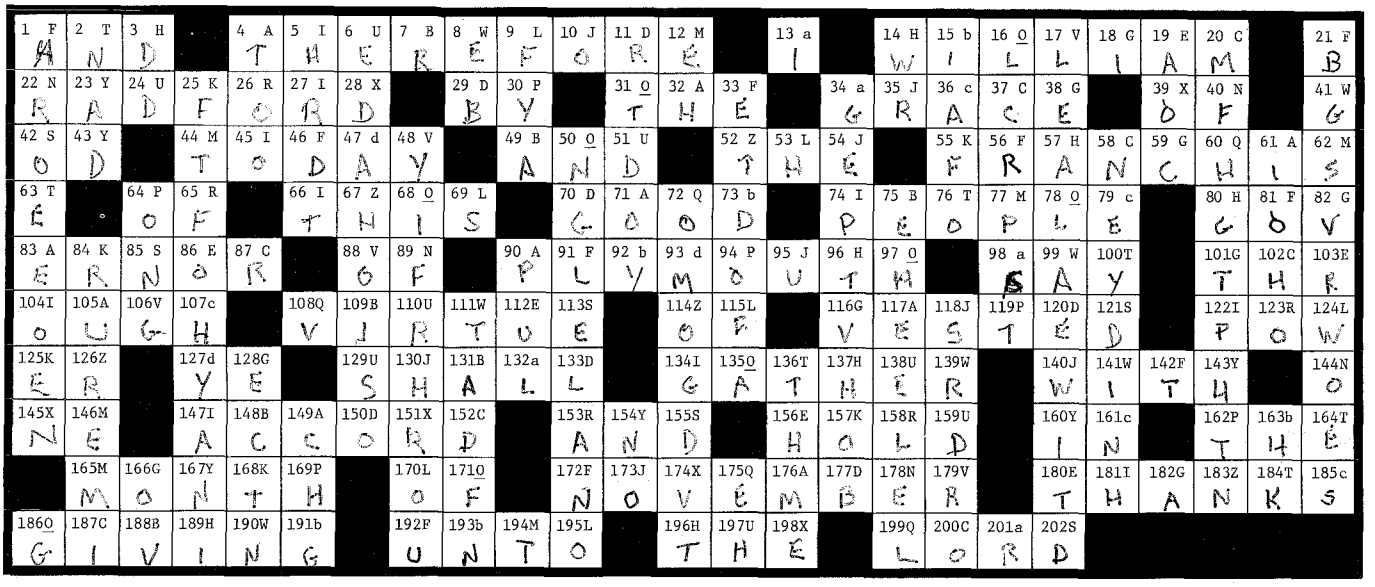
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Legal voice — 176 71 105 4 32 90 61 117 149 83

B. *Greed* — 131 188 49 7 109 148 75

C. Southern capital — 87 187 37 102 20 200 58 152

D. Turkey Day target — 70 150 177 29 133 120 11

E. Writer — 19 112 180 156 86 103

F. Where King Arthur dined (2 words) — 56 81 192 172 46 142 1 21 91 33

G. Producing memories — 128 82 166 59 182 101 18 116 38

H. Miser — 196 189 80 137 96 14 57 3

I. Ansel Adams product — 122 5 104 66 45 134 27 147 74 181

J. City dwelling (2 words) — 35 173 140 130 10 95 118 54

K. Struggle — 125 55 25 157 84 168

L. Stadium "hotdog" — 69 53 170 124 195 9 115

M. Teapot weather phenomenon — 194 146 165 77 12 62 44

N. Tender — 144 40 89 178 22

O. Sunset — 50 68 186 97 31 171 135 16 78

P. One kind of grin — 162 94 64 119 169 30

Q. Hut — 60 72 108 175 199

R. Standoffish — 153 158 123 26 65

S. Showed assent — 85 42 121 155 113 202

T. Speech at the locksmiths' *convention* — 184 63 100 2 76 136 164

U. Wheat or document — 129 197 110 6 159 51 138 24

V. Exalted praise — 106 17 88 179 48

W. Thankless person — 141 190 41 139 99 111 8

X. Stadium hotdog seller — 174 198 145 28 39 151

Y. Under control (2 words) — 160 167 143 23 154 43

Z. Star of note — 183 114 126 52 67

a. Lasses — 34 13 201 132 98

b. Small boat — 73 15 193 191 163 92

c. Pale — 36 185 107 79 161

d. Turkey Day tuber — 127 47 93

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 53 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram

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Hallelujah!

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 10

When the news came in, President Bush sat quietly in his large chair in the Oval Office and said in grave tones that we must not overreact. He is absolutely right about this. JINGLE BELLS! JINGLE BELLS! JINGLE ALL THE WAYYYY! It is proper to deem it a historical development, but its significance must not affect our judgment. OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING! OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY!!! After all, there is tomorrow to think about in Germany, GERMANY?!?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "GERMANY"? YOU MEAN WEST GERMANY OR YOU MEAN EAST GERMANY?and the score allows for many variations. Calmness is in order.

I remember the day in 1973 when as a delegate to the General Assembly of the United Nations, occupying the chair, I had to sit there and listen to the ambassador from the German Democratic Republic lecturing to the Human Rights Committee on the differences between life in his own country, where the pastures of the people were evergreen and life pleasant and just and equable, in contrast to life "elsewhere" in Europe, dominated by strife and competition and all the vexations of bourgeois life. I interrupted the speaker to make some reference or another to The Wall, which obscured the view of the Communists' green pastures, but the professional diplomats of course knew all about The Wall and about Communist rhetoric—I learned quickly that the thing to remember is that nobody pays any attention whatever to anything anybody says in the United Nations, which is one up for sanity. But as a freshman diplomat, who never graduated, the insolence of the East German diplomat stayed with me.

And so I wrote a book about the United Nations that fall, and made reference to the special hypocrisies of totalitarian states which actually go about the world boasting about their civil depravity. But The Wall and what it represented stuck in the mind, as it did with so many people—the antipodes of the Statue of Liberty: the great symbol of Gulag life—and a few years later I wrote a novel based on a young idealist's determination in 1952 to reunite Germany, a political effort finally frustrated by his assassination. By the MGB? No, by my hero, Blackford Oakes, under orders from Washington, because Stalin had said the alternative was a Third World War.

Still the ugliness of divided Germany hadn't left me and in 1978 I went to Berlin actually to look. It is hard to describe the impacted loathsomeness of it. Every season, the Communists added one more obstacle to stand in the way of the occasional Houdini who got through. That was the winter they added the dogs. It had begun with a concrete wall. Then barbed wire. Then watchtowers with machine gunners. Then huge spotlights. Then land mines. Then mountains of sharded glass. It is a comment on the limited resources of the Communist imagination that they forgot to plant poison ivy alongside The Wall.

And so I wrote a novel based on another young German idealist, determined to prevent the construction of The Wall in August 1961. My young German, who as a Jewish child had been sent to England for safety, had his contact in East Berlin, a secretary to the monster Ulbricht, predecessor to Honecker. And the word was that if three NATO tanks charged through The Wall that first day during its flimsy stage, the East Germans, backed by the Russians, would make a great show of opposition: but, actually, they would yield, as Khrushchev did not want a showdown with the West: not in August 1961, a full year before the missile crisis in Cuba. But . . . the U.S. military, under orders, seized the little column of tanks that had been secretly pulled out from the U.S. armory by young, trained resistance Germans—and so we never knew what would have happened, if we had asserted our rights to co-governing East Berlin. My young German hero, Henri Tod, did not live to see the sun set on the growing wall.

It was a great day, November 9, 1989, and someday must be nominated for international celebration. JOSHUA FIT THE BATTLE OF JERICHO, JERICHO, JERICHO! JOSHUA FIT THE BATTLE OF JERICHO! AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLIN' DOWN! □

The Anatomy of Corruption

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 15

Have you noticed the phenomenon involving Samuel Pierce? He headed up the Department of Housing and Urban Development for eight years and gave everyone the impression that he had done a good job (including this magazine, which published a favorable profile of him last December). And what do you know, it transpires that he was something of a bum, resident in Washington for the primary purpose of providing exercise for the manipulative fingers of various congressmen.

But whom is everybody mad at? Reagan! More Republican sleaz-z-ze. Now, nobody thinks Mr. Reagan was on the take, any more than it was thought that Ed Koch was on the take when, one by one, it transpired that many of his associates, who ran bureaus and boroughs, were. Nor are we propelled to high dudgeon by editorial clamor about the monitoring process.

The unexamined question is: Ought we to be surprised that money-spending government agencies tend to corruption? Consider the S&Ls. We read now, for instance, about the evolution of the Lincoln Savings and Loan Association in California. Mr. Charles Keating, in four years, increased the ostensible assets of Lincoln from $2 billion to over $5 billion, primarily through deceptive accounting. And then when the regulators smelled a foul situation, Mr. Keating began some heavy political contributions to those senators directly in charge of the regulators. Almost $1 million was given to Senator Alan Cranston, who has devoted so much of his public life to deploring the unhygienic condition of the rest of the world. It happens that I know Charlie Keating, and I know that if you listed one hundred political positions taken by Senator Cranston over the years, not one of those would coincide with the positions taken by Mr. Keating. So why would he contribute a million dollars toward Cranston's reelection? What he was doing was plain, and he has been honest enough to say so: He was buying protection.

But the kind of protection he bought would have been entirely irrelevant save for the outstanding factor behind the

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S&Ls—which is, of course, that the depositors' accounts were guaranteed. By government. Congressman Jim Leach (R., Iowa) commented that "The way Congress's chain was jerked by a few can only be described as extraordinary." It would be revealing to know whether Congressman Leach has protested the role of government in guaranteeing inflated prices to farmers, a subsidy which last year cost close to $50 billion.

It is difficult to focus public attention on the organic question. It is that the use of government invites the abuse of government power. We know this on the matter of productivity. On ABC-TV the other night the cameras focused on two herds of cows in farmland in East Germany, one herd owned by the state, the other owned by individual farmers. The privately owned cows managed to dispense exactly twice as much milk as the state-owned cows. One assumes that this is not a phenomenon that reflects the amount of time spent by the owners in petting their cows.

We are now headed for federal child care. Why child care should become a federal responsibility escapes the knowledge of most students of the Constitution. It is absolutely predictable that more money will be spent looking after children, when that money comes in from the government, than is necessary. New York City public schools cost twice as much per student to run as the parochial schools, and the resulting education is less than one-half as good. Samuel Pierce is a product of a system, and systemic revision is in order. The principle of subsidiarity reads that no public agency should undertake a task that can be performed by a private agency, and that no higher echelon of government should take on a task that can be discharged by a lower echelon. Miscreants like Sam Pierce and Charles Keating aren't really very interesting. They are simply the rash that results when you gorge yourself. □

Vladimir Horowitz, RIP

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 8

Everybody knows that Vladimir Horowitz was a) a great musician, and b) a temperamental human being. He was different from his father-in-law, Arturo Toscanini (I gather: I did not know Toscanini, though I worshipped him), in that he could be surprisingly affable, even unpredictably so. I met him under the most unexpected circumstances: on the Eastern Shuttle coming up from Washington 15 years ago. He came over—and introduced himself and his wife, smiles lighting up the whole of his volatile countenance.

For a while we were friends. I remember especially an evening at his home in Connecticut when another guest and I conspired ahead of time to devise ways to bring him to the keyboard. I mean, why have supper with perhaps the greatest pianist in the world, and not get him to play for you?

What, I asked him, would be his program the following month—when he would appear at the Metropolitan Opera House at the first one-man recital in the history of the house? Well, he said, maybe begin with something by Scarlatti. Then perhaps a sonata by Clementi—I grabbed my cue, and gave the eye to my co-conspirator.

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"Clementi? You are going to waste your time with Clementi?"

"Why Clementi?" my friend, his brows furrowed, chimed in, provocatively.

If we had rehearsed it it could not have gone better:

Vladimir Horowitz rose. His voice and countenance were now grave. "You doan lahk Clementi? Clementi wass a JEE-nee-us! Clementi is as goot as the middle Beethoven!"

"Come on," I said condescendingly, pushing my luck.

And he marched to the piano, lifted the lid—and we heard not only Clementi, but the entire, historic two-hour concert he would give two weeks later.

He and his wife were redoing the living room in their country house at the time and there was a third guest, their interior decorator, who during an interval while our host was walking his cat, and our hostess was off in the kitchen, confided to us in whispers the great happening of the week before, when the local Italian curtain-maker had come in to quote the cost of the new set of curtains. "It will come," he said to the decorator, "to $278." Pause. "Or—for nothing. If Mr. Horowitz will play next Sunday for me and my wife."

This was on the order of suggesting to Cleopatra that, rather than pay to repair her gondola, she might extend her favors to the shipwright. Horowitz froze, and there was a moment of most awful tension. Horowitz then stood up, bowed his head slightly, and said: "I would be honored to play for you and your wife on Sunday." This was noblesse oblige in marble. It would be either that—Horowitz would accept the alternative—or else Horowitz would pull out a shotgun and end two careers, one musical, the other having to do with curtains.

He was also a man of considerable polemical shrewdness. Mike Wallace and his cameras were at Horowitz's New York apartment doing a *60 Minutes* segment and Wallace graveled out in his interrogatory-accusatory voice, "Is it true that for 13 years you stayed here without going out?"

Horowitz looked at Mike Wallace, the disappointment of a child on his face. "Vot? Vot you mean? You doan like my room here?" The camera did a little tour of the comfortable living room. "Vot you doan like about my room?"

Poor Mike. What can you say to someone who suggests that questioning his self-enclosure in an apartment for 13 years is the equivalent of finding his living room unattractive?

Ah, but the time came when the Maestro wrote me off, wrote me off without a cent. The circumstances were: Another invitation by Horowitz to dinner, which we accepted. After dinner, the Great Man disappeared, to walk his cat or whatever. It had been a most awfully long day, and after a half-hour or so, I beckoned to my wife, rose, and bade goodnight to Mrs. Horowitz, who was clearly startled at guests leaving before they were invited to do so. Horowitz was a stickler for decorum. Once he showed me a letter from the First Lady, the first sentence of which had shocked him. "Jimmy and I are so pleased that you are coming to play for us at the White House . . . " "Imagine! She sess 'Jee-mee' when she mean zee Pressident off the United States! And she says nothink—NOTHINK!—about Wanda comink with me to the White House!" I clucked my Republican shock at Jacksonian manners.

I never heard from him (or her) again.

He was a very great musician, and, as long as music is bought and sold, Presidents of the United States and curtain-hangers in Ridgefield, Connecticut, will ask for "the Horowitz recording." □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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OFF THE RECORD

■ The poor ye shall always have with you, the Good Book says, and the Legal Services Corporation is happy to keep it that way. Originally set up to provide legal help to the indigent—e.g., getting child support for poor mothers—over the years it degenerated into a political front for all manner of left-wing causes. LSC money (that's taxpayer money) was involved, for example, in the case in which the New York Court of Appeals called the family a "fictitious distinction" and ruled that gay partners had as much right as spouses to inherit rent-controlled apartments. LSC has also been in the vanguard of expanding entitlement eligibility, achieving through the courts what the Left could never have got through Congress.

During the Reagan era an effort was made to curb LSC's enthusiasm for such lobbying by appointing conservative members to its governing board, who among other things have pushed for holding LSC accountable to the same waste, fraud, and abuse statutes that apply to every other government agency. Earlier this year an amendment to this effect almost squeaked through Congress (it was defeated 206 to 199). With a conservative board firmly in place there is a good chance it might pass next time.

But the whole reform initiative is now threatened. Of the six conservatives on the 11-member board, one is leaving and another's term runs out when the Senate adjourns. If President Bush does not make recess appointments between the date of recess and the date of the board's next meeting, the board will then be stacked 5 to 4 in favor of the Left, which will immediately use its new majority to purge the organization of managers who think LSC should be helping poor people rather than pushing for abortion, gay rights, and income redistribution.

The critical point is that if President Bush does make the necessary interim appointments, the leadership will be in place to carry on the battle. If he doesn't, the Left will recapture the organization and go on using LSC's $308-million budget to extend the Great Society through the courts. Is the White House watching?

■ In other news conservatives were disheartened to learn that John Buckley—novelist, political operative, and nephew to our editor-in-chief—has resigned as Communications Director of the National Republican Congressional Committee. His transformation of the NRCC Communications Division caps a ten-year career that included yeoman work on Jack Kemp's presidential campaign, work that is said to have been so good that it put him on the blacklist for a spot in any non-Kemp White House. In any case, Mr. Buckley—who has joined a D.C. communications firm—says he is getting out of politics.

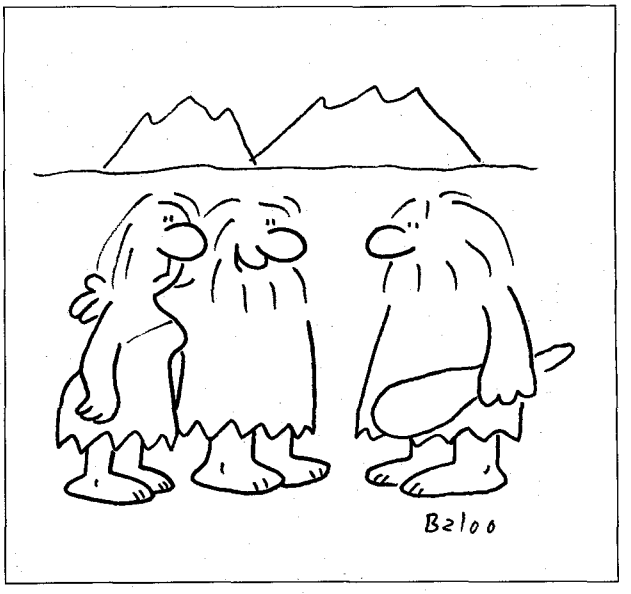
Though Mr. Buckley has been called "the pit bull of Republican operatives" by his counterpart at the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, conservative activists are not the only ones who will miss him. He proved a godsend for a Capitol Hill press corps all too used to the white-bread offerings of hired flacks.

"John could take a situation that was detrimental to his client and with humor and a certain ingenuity change the subject," says E. J. Dionne, former *New York Times* and soon-to-be *Washington Post* reporter. "Reporters liked to call him not just to get a quote or a spin but to talk about politics, which he did frankly and without ever being disloyal to the people he worked for."

■ Over on the Democratic side, meanwhile, several hundred people gathered in the Regency Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill for a conference hosted by the Democratic Leadership Conference on the topic: "Toward a Mainstream Agenda." In his keynote address Senator Charles Robb (Va.) urged his audience to join him in a revolt against "liberal fundamentalism" and to work to return the Democratic Party to the "values that are deeply ingrained in the American experience and character." In their conference packets attendees were introduced to the inaugural issue of a magazine dedicated to this goal, *The Mainstream Democrat*.

Unfortunately for Mr. Robb & Co., the assembled television cameras appeared more interested in the attendance of another member of the DLC, former Speaker of the House Jim Wright, who resigned earlier this year after he had been revealed to be out of sync with other mainstream American values, such as those found in the Ten Commandments. Not the kind of figure you want around when you're trying to get your party to turn over a new leaf. Perhaps the Honorable Mr. Wright is secretly working for Jesse Jackson—or Newt Gingrich.

■ Finally, at a Radio America reception celebrating the launch of a new radio program of daily headline exchanges between NATIONAL REVIEW and *New Republic* editors, a woman in the crowd went up to *The New Republic*'s Michael Kinsley. "Oh," she said, "you're Fred Barnes." Ah, fame. —CATO



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